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BY NED BUNTLINE

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OLD SIB CONE, THE MOUNTAIN TRAPPER.

BY NED BUNTLINE.

CHAPTER I.

THE HUNTING PARTY.

It was a lovely evening, in the beginning of September, 1841. The declining sun looked upon as desolate a scene as could well be imagined in that lovely region, the prairies of the Far West. As far as the eye could reach, nothing was to be seen but a dry and barren plain, stretching away to meet the embrace of the distant horizon. The grass was short, and embrowned by the melting summer sun, which, in that distant region, often shines for weeks unclouded, drinking up the moisture from the earth, and with it, its consequent vitality. For weeks, ay, months, no rain had fallen. Unclouded days and dewless nights had followed in their burning cycle; and the plain lay parched, and gasping for its cool drink, like one with a raging fever. Not a shrub, or bush, not even a tuft of grass, broke the sameness which everywhere met the vision. Silence and desolation seemed there to reign together. Not an insect chirped—not a bird flew by; nothing was heard, nothing moved; but there that lonely plain lay, like a stagnant ocean, basking in the light of a September sun.

The plain was one of many which extend almost uninterruptedly from Council Grove to the base of the far-distant mountains, near Santa Fe—a region of country which has nothing to exceed it for wildness and sterility on the whole continent of America. Covered with the short buffalo-grass in places furrowed by tremendous chasms—and again dotted with hills of shifting sand—the hunting-ground of the Comanches and other prairie tribes—the home of millions of buffaloes, antelopes, and deer—no wonder it is called the “Great Desert” by the whites, but by the Indians is looked upon as the paradise of hunters.

Springs, or streams of running water, are rarely to be met with, and when found are generally the camping-ground of roving bands of Indians, the Bedouins of the West, whose hands are raised against every white man, as every white man's against them. It is a land of plenty, and of want; of destitution, and of beauty; of life, and of death.

The sun was sinking slowly in the west. His beams had already lost much of their mid-day vigor, and the coolness of the yet distant night seemed creeping over the parched-up plain. As yet the scene was silent, and deserted; not an object moved; not a breath was heard; but yonder on a line with the setting sun, is something faintly distinguishable in the distance. It is so far away, that the unpracticed eye could scarcely notice it, so faintly and so small did it appear, cutting the horizon.

In a few minutes the object became much more distinct and what was at first an almost moveless point, soon changed into the heavy roll of a solitary buffalo. As the animal became more distinct, it seemed to be pursued by some enemy not yet in view; for with head advanced, and long and powerful leaps, it pursued its steady course across the plain, without for one moment lessening its headlong speed. The cause of its alarm soon became apparent. Immediately in the wake of the fleeing buffalo appeared two objects, advancing rapidly in pursuit. A few moments sufficed to ascertain that they were horsemen; but whether Indians or not, could not as yet be distinguished.

The pursuers were rapidly gaining upon their victim, who, now aware that it was a race for life or death, strained his utmost to escape. But all his efforts seemed in vain; already they were at his heels; and one, dashing up to the flying bull, ran for a few moments side by side with the animal, when a thin puff of smoke, followed by a sharp report, told that the rifle had already commenced the deadly game. This only served as a goad to spur the buffalo to still greater exertions. Another flash, followed by another report, told that the second pursuer had commenced his share in the sport. Still, with unabated speed, the now severely-wounded animal kept on his way. Nearer and nearer came the pursued and the pursuers; the horsemen had fallen off a little in order to reload; but

this respite was only for a few seconds; dashing up to the right of the fleeing game, their rifles again shot forth deadly charges, but apparently without in the least lessening the speed of their victim. They had now approached so near that the form and bearing of the hunters could easily be distinguished. They were both white, dressed in the garb of mountain men—buckskin hunting-shirt and pants—and mounted upon the keen, active horses of the prairies. The bull, though severely wounded, still kept on with unabated speed the bloody foam dropping from his open mouth, and his small red eyes glaring fiercely from his shaggy front. Again the hunters dashed upon him, pouring in their fire, but this time with more success; the huge animal, feeling the balls tearing through his vitals, and lashed into madness by the smarting pain, turned suddenly upon his pursuers, and with one desperate bound, caught the nearest horse upon his short and massive horns, tossing him and his rider for several yards, as if they were but playthings. The other hunter had been more wary, and now seeing the mishap of his companion, and the enraged bull springing to renew the attack, with a quick and dexterous maneuver, spurred his horse right in the face of the maddened beast, and with a sudden whirl of his blanket, which he had drawn from under him, succeeded in turning the attention of the bull upon himself. His plan was now to lead the buffalo as far as possible from the spot where his companion lay, motionless and insensible, under the quivering body of his horse, and his maneuvering to accomplish this was most admirable—showing him to be an old hand at this most dangerous sport. When the bull would stop, seeing the almost hopelessness of catching his antagonist, the hunter would dash forward, as if upon his very horns, waving his many-colored sarape in the very eyes of the beast, and ere the bull could make his plunge, was off again like the wind; yet taking care, by the closeness of his position, to lead the buffalo in pursuit. It was a thrilling sight to see that wild and lonely contest. The bull was bleeding from numerous wounds, his heart's blood was oozing from his side and marking every step he took on the stunted grass; yet his eye was as untamed as ever, and fixed with burning hatred upon his lithe opponent, who, now here, now there, threaten-

ing at every point, yet attacking at none, completely paralyzed every attempt of the wounded animal.

In the course of a few minutes, his efforts in drawing away the bull from the neighborhood of his companion were entirely successful; then, withdrawing to a short distance, his rifle was quickly reloaded, and taking a sure and steady aim at the fiery eye of the bull, he sent the ball far into his brain; one full gasp for breath, and the huge beast sunk, quivering, dead upon the plain.

To relieve his companion was his next business, whom he found feebly endeavoring to free himself from the body of his stiffening horse; a few moments sufficed for setting him at liberty; he was safe and sound, with the exception of a few trifling bruises, and a dizziness consequent to his strained position.

"Well, Fritz, I have certainly had a narrow escape," exclaimed the overthrown hunter, as he took a hasty view of the field of battle. "Though I feel sore in body with my own bruises, and sad in mind, to see my fine hunter so terribly maltreated, yet I can not help smiling when I think of the ludicrous somerset I took. I acknowledge myself conquered in my first bull-fight. I had no idea it was such a *beheading* business, or I would have remembered more particularly the injunction of the Doctor, 'to beware of stiff *horns*,' which I thought he always intended to be taken in a *spiritual* sense."

"I am sorry, indeed, Mr. Norwood, at your mishap, but am glad to see you take it so coolly. This is your first introduction to buffalo-hunting, and it has been a rough one. Experience will do you good; and in your next chase you will probably remember the Doctor's horns; but it is getting late, and it is yet some distance to camp. Mount my horse, and let us be off."

"You are right—it is late, but first let me take the saddle off my poor Pinto. Poor fellow!—you have carried me many a mile, and it grieves me to let your body now become a feast for wolves. If it had not been for my awkwardness, you would not have met this untimely fate!"

While the latter was busily engaged taking his "kit" from the stiff body of his dead Pinto, and fastening them on his companion's horse, Fritz, the other, was cutting some of the

best slices from the carcass of the buffalo, to take to camp ; but as the bull was poor and old, his principal selections were the tongue, liver, and a couple of shank-bones, for the sake of the marrow.

All things being prepared, Fritz, with the "meat" inclosed in a piece of the raw hide, slung on his shoulder, and the other on horseback, carrying the two rifles, started in a northern direction, almost at right-angles with the course where they first appeared chasing the buffalo. The latter, who was called "Mr. Norwood" by his companion, was a young man, apparently about twenty-five. He was of a good hight, with a firm, elastic build ; his whole make was what one might call "manly," with every muscle well developed, and every limb firmly hinged. His face was prepossessing in the extreme, one of those that always take us at first sight, with the sedate, open expression of an honest heart ; one of those faces, in fact, which one would always choose, had they a request to make, or a good action to be performed. His complexion *once* was fair, but the sun had embrowned it somewhat, giving more vigor to the expression of his countenance. His chin was decorated with a short, curling beard, and a slight moustache gave something of a stern appearance to his whole face. His dress was a buckskin hunting-shirt, plentifully fringed, and pants of the same material ; moccasins, beautifully "beaded," covered his feet ; on his head was a felt hat of a brownish hue, elongated into a sugar-loaf appearance, by the elevation of the crown ; the rim over the left ear was fastened to the side of the hat by means of a small silver button, from which depended a little tassel of sky-blue silk. His arms consisted of a long, heavy rifle, richly mounted, a pair of pistols, and a large bowie-knife firmly secured to his belt ; these, with the usual accompaniments of powder-horn and bullet-pouch, completed his equipment.

The other, his companion, who walked alongside, was similarly clothed in buckskin, but which, instead of presenting the yellow and clean appearance of the former, appeared to have been long accustomed to wind and weather. He was of a much slighter build than his companion, and not as tall by two inches ; but in every movement there was that cat-like agility which in any emergency would give him the ad-

vantage over stronger and abler opponents. His face would have been humane, were it not for a large scar on his right cheek, extending from the cheek-bone to the point of the chin, and, in its course, cutting deep into the corner of the mouth. This gave to his countenance a kind of forbidding look, which, however, the quiet humor within his full gray eye in a measure removed. His head-dress consisted of a red silk handkerchief, folded in the manner of a turban, with the ends knotted and hanging over the right ear, which gave a gay and holiday appearance to his figure. His age scarcely exceeded that of the other; the sun and tempest had bronzed his cheek, showing that his days had been spent amid the vicissitudes of a hunter's life. He was a real specimen of the mountain trapper—one whose whole existence had been among dangers and difficulties, and whose chief pleasure was the excitement of so hazardous a life. Known everywhere among the mountain-men by no other name than "Fritz," his character among such wild associates was proverbial for every thing that constituted a true friend, and one that was first in an Indian "fight," and the last to retreat.

By the time they had fairly started on their return to camp, the sun was beginning to hide his golden disk in the plain, and the cold blue of the approaching night was already seen climbing up the eastern sky. Fritz increased his pace, so that the horse of his companion was put to a kind of half-trot and walk to keep up. Norwood, who appeared to be in a deep reverie, was at last aroused by an exclamation from Fritz:

"What is it?" asked he, as he noticed his companion intently looking at a pile of buffalo-bones some distance in advance, and which appeared to have taken all Fritz's attention.

"I will tell you in a moment," exclaimed the latter, who, arriving at the object, halted and examined it for a little while with singular scrutiny. At last, appearing satisfied with his observation, he turned to Norwood, who was watching his actions with attention, and pointing to the object before him, exclaimed:

"That is a 'sign,' an Inj'n sign, and but lately erected—Arapahoes at that; but what they can be doing away on this

side of the little Arkansas, is more than I can imagine: probably after the Osages; there is more than one party, and quite a crowd of them, I assure you; we must keep a sharp look-out, or there will be hair taken. A party of them passed by this place to-day, but from this sign they were not going in the direction of our camp; that would be very satisfactory if there were no others roaming about."

"But how can you tell," replied the other, "from this heap of bones, that Indians passed here to-day, and Arapahoes at that?"

"Nothing so easy to one that has lived so many years among them. Do you see the position of that bull's skull? It looks toward the direction they have taken. The position of the horns shows that it is a war-party, and the peculiar arrangement of these legs, or rather marrow-bones, tells what tribe they belonged to. This sign is intended as a guide for some other party of the same band that had separated, and upon seeing this, will read as in a book how many days since their comrades have passed, and every thing else that concerns them to know. Come, let us on to camp; we have a good distance yet to travel, and traveling after night, over such a plain, when we have no landmarks, is not so pleasant."

"It can't be far to camp," replied Norwood. "We certainly have not been many hours out; nevertheless, I would like to taste some of the Doctor's cookery, for I assure you that flying somerset I took has settled my stomach completely. I am sorry for the mishap, since by it I have lost my poor Pinto, and if I had not another horse at camp, would certainly be bad enough off. How the Doctor's mouth will water at the sight of your load of meat! I never saw such a gourmand in my life; he is always talking about and inventing new dishes. No wonder he wanted to accompany me on my Western trip, when you happened to mention in his presence the sweetness of a buffalo-tongue and marrow-bone, and the delicate eating of the hump of a fat cow! But since he is with us, we must give him his fill; it is better to bear with his gluttony than his complaints."

"Oh! the Doctor will do well enough; he is a jolly companion," replied Fritz; "but as to that English captain, I don't like him at all; he is always complaining about the Yankees,

making fun of our peculiarities, as he calls it, and then dotting into that book of his every thing he sees or hears. He may be a fine fellow enough in his own way, but he doesn't suit me, not by a jug-full; and then he is always boasting of his bravery, and what he'll do if Injins dare molest us. He may talk that way now, because he has never been in a fight; but we'll see what his nerves are made of some of these days --and *then* let him talk to us about fightin' Injins."

"My dear Fritz, you are too severe on the Captain; he is a fine fellow, I assure you; to be sure, his manners are overbearing; but I speak from my own personal knowledge, when I say he is a true friend at heart. He likes his country—who don't? he thinks there is but little to admire out of England, and being of this opinion, he says some hard things of us Yankees. *This* I don't like altogether; but as to the rest of his peculiarities, they are those of his people, which I can willingly overlook. Selfishness is a garment which they only put on when traveling abroad; at home, they are kind and hospitable, and have none of that churlishness which makes them so unpalatable in other countries. I noticed that you were touched to the quick several times by some of his critical allusions, and I resolved to take the first opportunity to talk to you, and beg of you not to mind his words, for I assure you he is already your warm and sincere friend. I became acquainted with him in New York, and learning of my intention to take a trip across the prairies, he requested to be one of my party; so you see, here we are, some two or three hundred miles from Independence; wandering over the desert, just as fancy dictates, and entirely under your direction. We want to see a little prairie life, and under your tutelage, I have sufficient vanity to suppose I will yet become an expert hunter, notwithstanding my unlucky *début* to-day.

"As to the Doctor," he continued, seeing that Fritz did not reply, "he took this trip for the benefit of science. He has read of so many curiosities in this wild country, that no dangers could deter him from seeing for himself—especially as he considers it entirely done for the benefit of science. I would not have wanted his company for any price, for though he grumbles a good deal at the toil of traveling through such a melting heat, yet when arrived at camp, he is all bustle and

anxiety till coffee is prepared, and then he is good-natured himself."

It was now quite dark, and the howling of the wolves was heard on every side, adding a still greater sense of loneliness to the dreariness of the scene. Fritz kept in advance of the house, and though carrying a quantity of wood, moved along with a rapid trot, which in him required no more exertion than if on an ordinary walk. Newcomb, to whom he had been recommended as a guide and companion, often wondered at the tireless activity and strength of so slight a form. In his sagacity and courage, he had every confidence; but more than all, he admired him for calm in startling qualities of heart, which he certainly did not expect in one whose words had not been proved amid scenes of strife and bloodshed. This course he pursued every day, so that now he almost regarded him as a brother, and often regretted that such fine qualities should be wasted in an solitary and unprotected life.

However, if Fritz had known his thoughts to be such regarding his manner of life, he would certainly have concluded them very thing but satisfactory. He was only one of many who pursued this dangerous yet free existence to that of civilized society, where every thing is regulated by conventional rules. A trapper, or rather trapper's son, though one of the noblest and most generous in his wandering, has no conscience that when one becomes accustomed to it, no loss of restraint, and so overlooking his danger, no other kind of excitement can be so all-satisfactory. Such are his dreams, that even brought up in affluence, polished in manners, and well educated, have been known to give up everything for the untamed life of the prairie. If Fritz therefore perceived this kind of existence to any other, he was only doing what others, who had every thing to expect from their position in society, has done before him.

It was an hour or so after dark, when Fritz gave notice to his companion that they were approaching camp. Newcomb, at first, recalled his wandering thoughts; but as yet he could distinguish nothing but the apparently indefinite forms, now near and distant with the shades of night. Then suddenly he appeared to be upon the edge of an immense stream, and it was some time ere his eye could pierce the thickest impen-

trade of obscurity below. Following with his eye the direction of Fritz's arm, he at last recognized the light—red and brilliant, as if coming from another world, he distinguished the flickering flame of the camp-fire. After a cautious and precipitate descent to the narrow valley below, Norwood at last found himself safe in the arms of the Doctor, who, upon hearing the well-known shout of Fritz, had come forth to meet them.

"Ah! you're here at last!" he exclaimed, as he assisted his bruised companion to dismount. "Fritz says you nearly became food for the wild beasts. God preserve me from such a fate!"

"Ah, Doctor!" exclaimed Norwood, "no such thing will ever happen to you; your career is even too prosperous for an unruly bull to overturn, and such are the only chances to be dreaded, unless we happen on a band of Indians; and then, Doctor, look to your body—it will make a fine target to shoot at. But what in the name of common sense are you doing in out there?—taking out your case of instruments, as I'm alive! Why, Doctor, there's nothing the matter with me, I assure you; only a little soreness from a few slight bruises; and these will be entirely doctored by a good surgeon."

"Well, now," exclaimed the other, "I am truly glad to hear it; but speaking of a surgeon puts me in mind of what you went after; now, that's it; good, thank, be it so. Did you get any, eh?—Charley Norwood, what do you say? My stomach has been hungering after it ever since we got into the buffalo country. Desire has thinned me awfully. I'm not the same man I used to be."

The Doctor's jremials were, however, cut short by Fritz coming forward and understanding himself of his part.

"There, Doctor, don't be grieving; there's nothing for those ribs of yours! Come, you and I'll be cooks. Maybe I can learn you something about roasting buffalo."

While the two were busy preparing their dinner, the Doctor, speaking a halfling to open the door, and throwing a pillow of his saddle on the ground, he was in a moment in a comfortable repose. His head was thrown back, and the character of the Doctor and Fritz, at their camp, was a live banished sleep from more weary eyes than his. "Sleeping

that all his efforts were useless, he seated himself by the fire, endeavoring to draw his mind from the contemplation of his wrongs by observing the activity with which the Doctor moved his clumsy legs around the savory mess, and the heartiest contentment pictured on his round and rosy face.

"What have you done with the Captain?" inquired Ned, wondering that his form was nowhere to be seen among the fixtures of the camp.

"Is it the Captain you are inquiring about?" replied the Doctor, as he paused to wipe the perspiration from his glowing face. "The Captain?—where should he be but among the mules; they are his fit companions. I never knew an Indianman, but one, that didn't insult his company, and he was an Indianman. The Captain is a bear—a perfect ignoramus—he will be a fool!—he doesn't know the difference between civility and bones! He's an ozer—a ulcer on the nose of science!"

After giving vent to his opinion of the Captain—every word of which was accompanied by an extended swing of a large spoon that he happened to have in his hand, and with which he flourished round his head as a lawyer would his fist—he took him again to his occupation of preparing supper, which, under his and Fritz's management, was soon spread smoking hot upon the grass, near enough to the fire, so that its light served the place of a lamp. While the Doctor was on his knees, pouring out the coffee into the tin cups, Fritz started to the spring, which was a little distance off, to call the Captain. The Doctor, in the meantime, was not impatient; how his little gray eyes watered at the sight of the two marrow-bones! and how the smell of the nicely-fried liver made his thick, smoky nose tingle with anticipated delights! But no man is sure of his dinner until it is within him; and the Doctor was about to be another exemplification of the truth of that old maxim, "There's many a slip betwixt the cup and the lip."

A sudden noise was heard in the direction of their abode. The animal's appearance to be in great haste, snorting, and prancing about the prairie.

"A stampede!" exclaimed Ned, as he started to his feet, forgetting the pain of his bruises in his anxiety.

"A what, did you say, Charley?" cried the Doctor, still kneeling, with his hand upon the candle-pot, and with the most awful terror pictured upon his countenance, as the fire drank in the unusual names. "Is it Indians, Charley?" he again inquired, as the noise became louder and heavier.

Now the Doctor, who, in all his recollections, had never known across such a world as stampede, was terribly alarmed. His imagination could only picture out some huge, ferocious, and non-descript animal, that had attacked the natives and horses, and would probably finish its supper on him. Standing over the darkness as if his eyes could read a thousand horrible shapes in every shadow, and the feeling coming over him that he was alone, no wonder that awful sensation.

He felt "rather frightened," as he owned afterwards. But, though the Doctor was "so shocked," he still had sufficient reflection to know that self-preservation was the first law of nature. Snatching a marrow-bone in each hand, off he darted with the most astonishing velocity, in a contrary direction to the noise, and at every leap imagining the dreadful and unknown "stampede" at his heels!

In a few minutes every thing was again quiet; but the red fire still burned brightly—casting, however, but a faint light into the surrounding darkness. On a sudden, a voice was heard at a little distance, exclaiming:

"Git along, you cussed old critter!—what are you afraid of?"

This was quickly followed by a loud and heavy knock, apparently upon the ribs of some animal, to enforce the rider's meaning.

"Come along, Dutch!" the same voice went on; "come along, my little 'un—just foller me. I'll protect ye—what are ye afraid of? Indians ain't worse than I in' best, I know. 'Course it's a dod-darned country, I say!"

In a few moments, a tall, lank figure, mounted on a half-starved buck, was seen emerging from the darkness, followed by another personage directly the reverse of the former, and likewise looking rather a lumpy-looking animal. It was manifestly some old fellow of the Knight of the Woodland Company, and his jolly spouse. As soon as the tall old man had reached the fire, he very hastily dismounted; and taking the

and he off his mule, turned him adrift to manage for the night. Then drawing himself of his powder horn and bullet-pouch, which, together with his long, domestic-looking rifle, he placed beside his saddle, he took an "observation" of the various articles surrounding the fire. Appearing perfectly satisfied with the sight, he turned to his follower, who yet remained perched upon his mule, and with that peculiar Yankee twang so hard to describe, exclaimed:

"Git down!—why don't you git down and let your critter rest?—Look ther!" he continued, seeing his companion had obeyed, and pointing with his long and bony arm to the supper, which remained where the Doctor had placed it. "Look ther!—ther's a supper for a hungry belly!—red injin cakes!—and I haven't seen since I left old Long's at Independence. I reckon, what coffee?" he continued, as, serving himself, he gulped down a whole cup-ful at a draught. "These fellows knows how to live; must be from old Missouri, I guess. Here, Dutch, come and eat--no ceremony in these diggin's—every man for himself!"

"Dutch," as he called him, no ways loth, followed suit; and between them, threatened in a short time to entirely destroy the Doctor's cookery. The tall unknown was dressed in a well-worn pair of Kentucky jeans; upon his head was one of those steel wooden caps, in shape and appearance like a rifle cap; on the apex was a little round ball of wool, which gave it the appearance of a miniature church tower. He had an elongated face, thin and dry; with a large, hawk-like nose, and small eyes, hid under a mass of overhanging brows. His whole countenance was of the sleepy, satisfaction-kind—one that would make the fortune of a catch dealer. "Dutch," his companion, was rather diminutive, with a broad, round-featured countenance, showing the very antithesis of the other. He had on an old buck coat, which was once brown, but now changed to many colors, by various patches which had been worked on without any regard for the dye or the original garment. His short legs were incased in broad, upstays, dirty and mossy by long use. On his feet were narrow-soled shoes of tanned buff hide, and his head was protected by a heavy-wreath, broad-brimmed chip hat, giving to his whole person a square-top appearance. The two sat side by side,

devouring the well-cooked victuals as though it had only as if prepared for themselves alone.

When in the very midst of their labors, a third face was seen peeping from behind a pile of sa-bles, and gazing with a blank look of astonishment and fear at the two intruders. It was the fat, full visage of the Doctor, who, seeing he was not pursued by the stampede, after running through of breath and hearing no more of the alarming noise, had ventured slowly and cautiously back to camp. Distinguishing two figures at the fire, the first impression was that they were of his own party; but a few steps served to dispel his illusion; and with much hesitation, and after various attempts, he had at last mustered sufficient courage to crawl up to within a few yards, where, thrusting up a heap of buffalo-robes, he could gaze without fear of discovery.

It would be vain to attempt to describe the Doctor's feelings, when he saw two such towering figures quietly seated at the fire, and helping themselves with great gusto to the good things set before them. How his eyes dilated to a wonderful extent, watched every motion, and saw with horror the repetition with which a whole heap of fried liver was put into the enormous mouth of that large, burly, threatening-looking figure! He trembled in very spirit at the thought that some of that fresh buffalo-meat, which he had cooked so carefully, would be left for him. But there was no help for it; his plans would not permit him to expose himself; and there he lay, extended on the grass, with his head in white foam peeping from behind his robe, and his eyes now and then jerking it down, as he thought the eyes of those unknown were directed toward him.

The Doctor suffered woefully; but his feelings were very far relieved in a measure, by hearing the well-known voices of his friends on their return. Starting on a sudden from his hiding-place, he ran forth to meet them, and catching Norwood by the arm with one hand, while with the other he pointed to the strangers at the fire, exclaimed:

"See there, Charley Norwood, see there, what comes of your running away! Supper's done for; all my good cooking gone, vanished in *evaporis*—and where's that is it? You wouldn't stay to watch it—that infernal stampede frightened you away, all of you—and I—"

"You ran away too," replied Norwood, who looked somewhat heavily at the wretched countenance and excited gestures of the Doctor. In the mean time they had approached the fire, and the two warblers were just finishing the Doctor's supper.

"Well, strangers," said the large unknown, turning to the two and stretching himself to his full length, "supper's done, and I guess that's about all. Hyer's well, and that's all right. That land's a good deal better since we've been here. I don't know what a lot of you've had running over the land country, but I don't see you get! Some days we get some, and some days we don't. That

was just owing to what we got. No water neither; cuss such a damned country! whar wun can't get out of sich a wilderness! Lost, did I say? yes! wuss nor lost!—I rived, and could for keepin'! Strangers, you won't have objections to our stoppin' with you over night?"

It was impossible to resist so pathetic an appeal; and when our party found that they had been lost, and almost starved, even the Doctor, in his charity, volunteered to cook another supper. The fire was kindled up again with wood, poles and bushes were put in requisition, and soon the whole party was seated upon the ground, discussing the good things of a primitive kitchen. The Captain, who was a mild hearted and good looking fellow, however, descended from his dignity, and with the greatest good humor, helped the Doctor to dress his marrow-bones, which he had taken particular care of in his flight. The tall German, who called himself "Zach," was again persuaded to "help himself," and was particularly attracted by Fritz Doren and Puss-pull, the rabbit-boy, seemed to be old acquainted with the way they fattened; and Norwood himself seemed to enjoy himself in his house, having exercised himself on his way to getting the night-hawk animals. When supper was over, and Puss-pull was "cleansing up," the Doctor, who put the supper away, went to one of the poles, and produced a small sized bottle, which Fritz averred contained the "Doctor's brandy"; this was passed from one to another, until it had taken the rounds, and was declared "sparkling" by the Doctor. Merriment was the order of the night, and even the serious countenance of Zach relaxed somewhat at the unaccustomed conviviality. Night was far advanced ere they rolled themselves in their blankets to sleep; all but Fritz and Norwood, who watched alternately on guard till daylight.

CHAPTER II.

A CHANGE OF CAMP.

THE whole party rose bright and early; and by the time the sun was up, had breakfasted, and were saddling their animals for a move. The place where they had formed their camp a few days since, and which the party was now preparing to leave, was on one of those small creeks that empty into the Arkansas from the side of the "cross-ties." It was several miles south of the Santa Fe trail, and far enough removed from the usual course of Indian to Indian trade; and as Fritz expected, when he brought them there, would afford a sheltered retreat. But knowing their camp situation, no signs of Indian war to be met with, and they had concluded to move their camp to the Arkansas, on the next day after we have introduced them to the

reader. It was in consequence, therefore, of their previous arrangement, that all hands were up, and preparing for an early start.

Their camping-place was in a narrow valley, or rather dell, through which flowed the creek, now reduced to a mere trickle by the long-continued drought. At a little distance was a clump of cottonwood trees, and willows, surrounding a spring of clear water that issued from the side of the bluff, and cascaded down into the little creek. This narrow valley was some fifty yards across; on either side the bank, or bluff, rose for more than a hundred feet, in some places almost perpendicular, the slopes of which were covered with short, stunted grass. It was a beautiful and lonely retreat, and Norwood was so enchanted with its bewitching quietness that he thought his life might there be spent, without a single regret for the busy world which he had so lately left. The whole party moved up the side of the opposite bluff, which, after some difficulty with the heavy animals, was safely accomplished. Ziah and Doctor accompanied them, but latter accompany Norwood's party, it being in vain to attempt regaining the caravan to which they were attached, and which must now be at least a hundred miles away, on its course to Santa Fe. Besides, even if they were willing to seek their way back to the settlements, Norwood would not have permitted it, for he was well aware, from what Fritz had said, that Indians were about; and it was a matter of astonishment to him that the two wanderers had not been picked up by some of their roving bands.

When they were all collected together on the bluff above, the party made quite an imposing, if not magnificent, group. Ziah was peculiarly impressive. Mounted on a buck, sleek-sided horse, with his long legs thrust into the lion stirrups, his feet extended far in front of the mule's fore-legs, with the reins raised toward the heavens, and a corresponding downward drooping of the heels, his body erect, as stiff and jointless as a ram, with his church-like countenance—yet ever wandering eye—surveying his long, home-made-stocked ride before him on the saddle—no wonder he was *the* one of the party; a distinction that he took very complacently. The Doctor seemed particularly to admire him; probably from the exhibition of his remarkable power on the preceding evening—or it might be from that singular attraction that always brings dissimilar persons to close communion; but whatever the cause was, the Doctor appeared so fond, and so intimate as to attract the attention of Fritz, who remained, in his quiet, humorless way, silent and unmoved, never more to be seen in view, as Farnham still kept their journeying hand in hand."

The caravan then moved on slowly in the direction of Norwood's place of rendezvous with the Indians—over a hilly and apparently boundless plain. The day promised to be very warm,

for the sun rose clear and brassy, and not a puff of air had yet greeted them on their early excursion. Many an anxious eye did the Doctor cast toward the sky, mentally praying that a cloud might arise to give him some hopes of a mitigation of the threatened mid-day heat; but every thing wore the appearance of a "mighty all-fired hot day," as 'Zack termed it, and the Doctor's flesh began already to suffer in anticipation of what was to come.

"Well, Doctor," exclaimed the Captain, rapping his knuckle on the table, "examining the pulse of the weather?—how is it?—does it promise an increase of fever? If I might dare to be taken into your consultation, I would by all means propose a shower-bath, with wet blankets hung over the sun. What say you to my prescription?"

"It would be the very thing," replied the other, "if we had a bull's gall for a cathartic."

"There, now, none of your insinuations," exclaimed the Captain, a little nettled. "You Yankees are always insalting. But this is owing to your being up in a kind of savage state, without being blessed by gentlemanly society. I never saw any thing so civil in your country yet, unless it was the Doctors; and they were always civil—for nothing!"

It was now the Doctor's turn to feel himself insulted. The color mounted to his face, until it seemed ready to burst with concentrated anger; his temples were convulsively agitated, by which his pulse was the sadder, by sundry violent kicks from the rider's spasmodic affection. There is no telling what the Doctor in his wrath might not have been prompted to do, had it not been for the intervention of 'Zack—who hitherto had been a calm observer of the dispute—but, now, seeing the agitation of his friend, the Doctor, of whose knowledge he seemed to have a wonderful impression, and not being at all pleased at the Captain's wholesale insinuation against the Yankees, thought it consistent to take a part in the discussion. Giving his long legs a hitch in the stirrups, and straightening himself on his saddle, he turned to the Captain, and with a knowing look, commenced:

"I don't hyper!—you better!—maybe you're an Englishman. Well, my advice is, that you oughter be kinder gentle. You're too hot to talk so hot; the Yankees is good for both better, say that. I know'd an Englishman was in our town, but he was bigger 'n you, and one of our little boys knock'd his head smartly on the top of it, 'em he call'd him 'Buckard-Johnson,' 'cause he was a big fellow, you know! But I'm the bigger 'n you, 'cause I know the full state of my intellects, and I know I'm a powerful doctor, and I want to be a powerful doctor every way. But one thing I won't stand; it thies me considerable to hear these United

States run down so by foreign Englishmen. So you see, Captain, if you want to have peace on your side, say nothing about the Yankees; they are the very dickens in a scrape, and are considerable!"

This advice—which took Noziah Ponce a longer time to deliver than us to write, and which he uttered with a particular peculiar motion of his hat, which kept moving up and down in front of his nose—had the desired effect. The Captain satisfied that he could make nothing out of him, spared his horse, and joined Norwood and Fritz, who were some distance in advance. The Doctor could not recover his equanimity for some time, notwithstanding the soothing expressions of Zion. The hit of the Captain's was too severe, and he determined to return it with interest at some future time.

The sun becoming warmer as the day advanced, made them quicken their pace, so as to arrive at their "winter" place before the heat would become too overpowering—in which Fritz assured they would find plenty of good water and grass, but no "shade;" which last inconvenience was anything but satisfactory to the Doctor, as the sun began to tell upon him with powerful effect.

"Ugh!" he exclaimed, as for the first time he conversed with his well-saturated hat, thereby to keep the sun from blinding him; "ugh! but it is hot! I really believe I'll yield! Zion, you can possibly appreciate my feelings. The sun glimmers off your body—there's nothing there to hold it—your skin is a conductor; but no—the sun feels on me. I know not how it is, but my flesh has always an affinity for heat; that's one of the mysteries of science. I tell you, friend, I'm a worshiper to my love of science; if it had not been for my passion and devoted affection to her, I wouldn't have been here; no! I don't think I would run the risk of being dried up, and starved—not mentioning the danger to my scalp from the savages—if I had not been inspired by my love of knowledge. I have always been a lover of knowledge—a seeker after the new truth, the *everlasting life*—and all for the benefit of my fellow-men. It is this that makes me bear up so bravely against the inconveniences of traveling in this desert region; of which heat and hunger are the greatest. Ah! my dear friend, never forget of the worship of science; if you do, you'll grow big with vanity, and you'll never be happy, never! Ugh! but it is hot! Zion's stilling rings were nothing to talk of!"

But, notwithstanding the Doctor's lamentations, the sun grew now hotter, and the perspiration would continue pouring from every part of his body. He was obliged that he dismounted his light summer coat, then took it off, and laid it on the ground, and placed his oil cloth covered Panama; realizing that, as compared to his dress—no change that he could make in his method of riding—would give him the least relief. Often and he often

roam around, in the vain effort to distinguish a tree or bush, or even a tuft of grass, whose very appearance would have been a relief. On every side was the level, parched up plain, as smooth and as hard as a Russ pavement, apparently limitless in extent; and above was the unbroken, hazy sky, glowing like the vault of a furnace. Even the the others began to think "this was one of the hot days," as well as the Doctor; and Newwood urged Fritz to increase his speed, so as to get to water as soon as possible.

"We'll not have far to go," replied Fritz; "you see that little irregularity in the plain some distance in advance? That's our stopping place. I know that place well; many a time I made it my camping-place for the night. It's a desert spot; but, then, one is always sure of finding a supply of good water, which, in this part of the country, is all a man wants. We'll have to keep our eyes skinned, I'm thinking, or the Indians might make a dash for our cattle yard. There's war paint handy, and I should like to be enabled to find a parcel of it at the little lake where we intend stopping. Just order up Pasqual and Derek with the cavallada, so as to be all together, and I'll ride on ahead to make observations."

The result of the reconnaissance was entirely satisfactory, and the whole party was soon in sight of the small lake, that lay in a narrow basin, some twenty feet below the level of the plain. In the little marshy immediately surrounding the water, there was plenty of good grass, and the first marks were soon made and named a halt, under the charge of Pasqual and Derek. The Doctor, notwithstanding the almost insupportable heat, had a pile of bath-towels gathered in a few minutes, and with the aid of Zach, was unpacking the cooking utensils to commence their pleasant occupation, preparing dinner. Leaving the others at their respective occupations, Newwood and Fritz ascended the bank, and commenced a rigorous examination of the surrounding plain, for Indian signs; but not a moving thing could be seen. Descending to the edge of the lake on the opposite side from where their companions were, Fritz's keen eyes soon detected, from the trampled grass, that something had been done. Examining still further, they found several little signs, which to Fritz, was sufficient proof that a party of Indians had stopped there to water no later than that very morning.

While Newwood remained along the margin of the lake, to let the Cavallada know the result of their observations, Fritz again ascended the bank, or bank, to take another and better look over the surrounding country; but every thing was as he had found—nothing was to be distinguished that bore any appearance whatever to either man or beast. Yet Fritz saw something but satisfied. He was too well acquainted with Indian character not to feel anxious at the evident neighbourhood of a large band, who,

if aware of the vicinity of any whites, would put forth all their ingenuity to surprise them. Fritz was an old hand at reading Indian signs, and those evidences on the margin of the little lake did not at all please him. They appeared to have been smoothed over; they were not natural; a party stopping to water would have left more traces on the grass, and their intention was to deceive.

An old trapper like him was not to be deceived so easily. Returning again to the lake, he examined these marks more minutely. Apparently satisfied that his conclusion was correct, he went in among the animals, and taking his horse by the mane, led him to the camp and bridled him; then taking his bow and arrow in his hand, leaped on his bare back, and cantering to where Norwood and the Captain were conversing, to shield themselves from the burning sun by elevating the corners of a buffalo robe on their sides, exclaimed:

"Look out!—there's other business on hand; there's Indians not a mile from here! Set all hands to work to carry the ponies, saddles, and every thing else to the lower shore; bundle them up in a short time, and our baggage will move on good wheels to work. When that's done, load all the animals, and drive them up here, where they will be within reach of our rifles. I'm going out scouting. There's a place over here where I expect the Indians are lying hid. It is a new discovery, where there was once a small lake, but it has been dried up for years. If there, they're waitin' till about the time they suppose we're takin' dinner, when they hope to surprise us. I will soon see if they're about. Don't delay a moment in getting ready!"

He touched his horse, and in a moment was upon the bank, and cantering over the plain. All was instant confusion in the camp—the Doctor was particularly so.

"Pardon on the savages!" he growled; "couldn't they wait until a man gets his dinner? There's the coffee already boiling, and the meat cooking; every thing will be speedily done—this is certain! If I hadn't a conscientious scruple, I would swear—yes, I would! 'Zim, you needn't look so horrified. Why, it would make a bishop swear, to lose his dinner! And then, carrying these heavy loads up such a hill! 'Zim, there's only one scheme left; go, like a good fellow, and save me the trouble. I'll be regularly done up, boiled and fried—and expect to be served into the bargain. Ugh! how hot it is!—the thermometer must be up considerably. Hey! you, Charley Newman—jump up the animals, are you? I want to know, sir, how you can expect a man to fight that's got no dinner? No, sir; I have no stomach for it—in my vigor has oozed out. I'm as fit as a goose to fight!"

While the Doctor was thus busy giving his usual advice, every thing had been prepared according to Fritz's directions; and the

whole party were now assembled on the rim of the basin, with their rifles ready for the combat. Zink appeared as calm as death; the volatility of his former self had not to be seen in the least exhibited; his countenance betrayed not the least anxiety or emotion; his long, downy cheek and his rifle had been carefully repaired; and there he stood awaiting the result with the most stoical indifference.

Fritz was to be seen at the distance of half a mile, commanding the east gate; on him every eye was anxiously fixed. On a sudden, they saw him stop; then advance a few paces, and stop again; he had evidently seen something that bore a very low estimation. Another instant, he wheeled his horse and dashed back toward his companions. At the same time, as if springing from the earth, appeared a large crowd of dusky figures on horseback, who, with wild whoopings and brandishing of lances, followed in pursuit.

"Now, boys!" exclaimed Fritz, as he threw himself off his horse in their midst, "we are going to have a game of ball! Keep on hand and eye straight; make every ball hit its mark. It's not the first time I've fought the Comanches, and at greater odds than this!"

At this time, the Indians had arrived almost within rifle-shot, when, pausing, they galled and reared and reared our little party, whoopling and yelling with the greatest unison. There were upward of a hundred of them, all painted as if for battle, armed with long and well-bred war lances, which at every yell they rattled against their ball-belt shields, as if their voices could but make noise enough. Every one was naked to the hips, round which was wrapped the indispensable buckskin robe; their only skins glistered like snakes in the sunbeams. It was certainly a wild if not a terrible exhibition; and Norwood even began to think that there was more danger in an Indian battle than he had ever dreamed of.

Apparently satisfied with this warlike display, the Indians withdrew to a short distance, where they appeared to be consulting as to their next performance. In a few minutes one, who appeared to be the chief, advanced alone, and on foot, to some distance in front of his band, and made signs of friendship—signifying his desire of holding a talk. Fritz, telling his companions to "keep a sharp look-out," looked over the wall of protection of his lance, and with rifle in hand, advanced some ten yards the Indian awaited him. He was a powerful fellow, and rather awkward, with the exception of his legs, which were covered by a deer's skin, wrapped several times around his loins, and fastened over his right hip. His arms, from the wrist to the shoulder, were covered with broad brass bands, as evidence of his many successful battles; and from his ears were suspended two gourd ornaments, bound at each extremity with a gourd. In his right hand was a long lance, the

handle of which was beautifully garnished with various colored feathers; this was his only weapon. His whole appearance was one entitled to command respect, and when Fritz advanced, he thought he had never seen so fine a specimen of the savage.

"Ugh!" began the chief, "what does the white-face want upon our hunting-ground? Does he come to chase the buffalo, or is he after the long scalp locks of the Comanches? Speak!"

"The White Wolf is not unknown to me," replied Fritz; "I have seen his face before, away beyond the great river, where the Mexican moon was bright, and his warriors were rich with Mexican goods and horses. I know he is a great hunter and will not lie. Why does he call this his hunting-ground, where the Pawnee, the Osage, and the Arapaho hunt the buffalo? I dreamed your hunting-ground was toward the setting sun."

"The white-face dreams a lie. All the land is ours, from the big hills to the warm meadows, many leagues distant from the forked river to the setting sun; the Comanche goes where he please, and no one can cross his path and live!"

"The White Wolf tells lies. Let him keep his land. We are journeying toward the big hills to catch the white bear of the mountains, and to see our brothers by the salt lake."

"Tis good. But let the white faces give us their arms; we will let them go, and our young men shall not harm them; the bear runs shoot a great distance; we want them for our braves."

Fritz, who had kept a wary eye upon the body of Indians who were only fifty yards off, was now a little uneasy to see five or six warriors advancing to where he was standing. Pointing them out to the chief, he asked:

"Does the White Wolf want more braves to help him hunt? Let him keep his young men away, or my long gun will speak too."

"The white face will not be harmed. The braves want to listen to our council. The White Wolf's word is good."

Norwood, who had been anxiously awaiting the result of the conference, was very much alarmed for the safety of his friend when he saw these other Indians riding toward him. Following his first impulse, which was to assist Fritz at all hazards, he rushed to join him, giving his companions, as he was going, some instructions not to leave their horses, no matter what might happen. As soon as the rest of the Indians saw Norwood advance to join his comrade, they followed their horses and began galloping up, brandishing their knives as if to threaten the two pale-faces.

"Place your back to mine," said Fritz to Norwood, "there is danger here; be firm; everything is in jeopardy; don't let any circumstances. Don't let the white face be harmed!"

Then turning to the White Wolf, he again commenced in the Indian tongue.

"Does the White Wolf always go to council with so many braves? Or is he afraid that the pale-faces will fly like eagles, so that they may escape from the arms of the Comanches?"

"White Wolf is wise; he wants his younger men to listen. There may be wisdom in the words of the pale-face."

"Let us pass; our path is not with you; our faces are toward the big snow hills; we are not such as that he hid in the grass and we speak with forked tongue. Our hearts are warm for the red-men."

"The guns of the pale-faces must be ours. I have spoken."

Nowak, who did not understand a word that was said, saw that the Indians were terribly excited at the last words of the chief. They formed a circle around our adventurer, which they contracted by little and little, until they had come within a few feet, and from their excited looks were apparently but waiting for the signal from their chief to throw them with their hands. Fitz, as well as Nowak, saw that the time was indeed critical—that their lives depended upon the mere will of one man; and that without a successful effort to work upon his feelings, they were gone. Cocking his rifle, and bringing the muzzle almost against the brawny chest of the chief, he exclaimed:

"And what if the pale-faces refuse to give up their guns?"

"They must die!"

"Tis well. Will the eagle give up his wings? Will the panther suffer his claws to be cut? Is the pale-face a fool to give himself up to his enemy? Will the White Wolf say how many squaws are in his lodge?"

"There—as beautiful as doves, as graceful as the antelope!"

"Tis well. How many children make the eyes of the White Wolf glad?"

"Six; in the knee, up, up, to my heart."

"Who punishes the bannock, and kills the wild bear, and strikes the young antelope, and returns with their meat to feed the squaws and the young eagles of the White Wolf?"

"Ugh! Who but White Wolf himself?"

"Who would provide meat for his lodge, if White Wolf was gone to the spirit-land?"

"The Great Spirit alone."

"Would the heart of his squaws be sad—would his young ones weep, if White Wolf should never again return to his lodge?"

"Would the dove grieve for the hawk? Would the young eagle hunger, though starved? What does the pale-face know of the Comanches' heart? I know; I know no more."

"Now, listen, the White Wolf wants our blood—let him have it; let us say this, it goes to your heart; it never lies; your warriors may pierce our shields with knives, but you shall go to the spirit-land with me. There, who will bring next

to your lodge?—who will train up your children and make them great in battle? There will be sorrow and sickness in the place of mirth—a dark cloud in the place of sunshine. White Wolf will be dead. The pale-face has no sorrow to him, no child to feed, no tent to rest in; when he dies there will be none to weep. Why should he want to live? There are none to love him. Let White Wolf speak, and they will see together. The pale-face has said it, he is ready!"

It would be useless to attempt to describe the effect of these last words of Fritz produced in the mind of the chief. His chest seemed heaving with some powerful emotion; all the feelings of his better nature had been roused. Springing forward, he grasped Fritz by the hand, and while his fingers trembled witness to his sincerity, exclaimed:

"The pale-face is my brother; his words are in my heart; let him go to the big hills; our arms will be tried!"

Then waving his hand, his warriors fell back, and our two heroes walked unscathed from their midst.

"Now then," said Fritz, as soon as he saw they were fairly out of reach of the Indians, "we must take them at their word, and leave this dangerous neighborhood. To-day they are our friends; to-morrow they may cut our throats. We must put as much land between us as we possibly can, before the night comes on. Do you go and prepare things for our instant departure. I will attend to the animals."

In a few minutes our party had their robes packed, the saddles on their horses, and were leaving the neighborhood of such dangerous visitants. The Indians had all vanished, having withdrawn again to their barrow; and so effectually were they concealed, that one might ride within twenty paces of their camp, and never once dream of their being there. During our journey within a circumference of many miles. As the sun was now well hurried over, our party began to breathe more freely; and as less life was always lost in the quarter, so hunger and thirst had entirely been forgotten during the threatened journey of the Indians; but now, all immediate dangers being removed, the exclamations of the Doctor at last were heard, and frequent; and many were the epithets which he bestowed upon the "pale-faced savages," who had not only interrupted their journey, but had also forced them to travel under such a humiliating condition. The Doctor felt angry, and he wanted badly to make a part of his displeasure on the Cheyenne; but the Indian warriors took good care to keep out of his way—and so much did he fear of the Doctor; but he did not like to remain behind the rest of the nation, whom Zashah was endeavoring to persuade to have a part in their journey, and he was obliged to follow them.

But every thing must have an end, and when the Doctor's complaints were brought to a close when he saw that the blue hills in the distance were beyond the Arkansas, on

which river they were to camp for the night, and where, according to Fritz's words, "Indians were to be counted by acres." And soon, indeed, they met a sight that was at the same time a surprise and a disappointment.

There was no view of the Arkansas, stretching from the point on which they were to a long line of sand hills distant several miles, forming the western boundary of the river, and which ran back into the desert until they were lost in the distance. Through this valley, but washing the base of the sand hills, flowed the turbid Arkansas, whose banks, as far as the eye could reach, were entirely devoid of trees; not even a bush or twig could be distinguished amid that ocean of long and yellow grass. It was a scene of boundless magnificence. Yet that which most took their eyes was not the sight of the so long back-for river, nor the extent of the view on every side, but there, beneath them, filling the whole valley, and the marshes down, as far as the eye could see, were millions of buffaloes, feeding on the wild luxuriance of nature. The whole valley appeared to be but one mass of moving creatures, wandering at will among the extensive pastures of that lonely river. The sight produced its effects, according to the various dispositions of our travelers. On Norwood it produced a religious number, and kindled in his breast an enthusiasm for the glorious production of God's creating hand, that had peopled that lonely plain, and filled it with those countless herds that no civilized government could number. The Captain, however, for his part, did not to be astonished or pleased at any thing he might see in Yankee land, but for his religious friends (Gentiles) and for one owned, that "this collection of herds was an extraordinary thing of the kind in the country." That Doctor's imagination ran altogether upon that point, but Fritz, disappointed, and with this view, took his very stomach round with unexpected delight. Zach was the only one who appeared entirely unmoved; his solemn countenance underwent no change, and he sat on his mule, calmly recommending the learned exclamations of his friend the Doctor, who endeavored in vain to communicate some of his own feelings to his companion.

The men were walking toward the distant sand hills, at a very disagreeable distance, where it was to be that a company of Indians were to be met. The Doctor, apparently too fatigued to walk, was, however, pushed out of their party, and found it a very disagreeable journey with the Indians, and they were very weary. Fritz had the very best of horses, and he was very much surprised to find that the Indians were so good. These the Indians were very good, and at the Doctor and Zach were very good. The Doctor was very good of his horse, Fritz, the Captain and Norwood were very good of the Indians, and were very good with the Indians, and were very good of the Indians. That was a sight

of feasting; every one was in good-humour. The Captain and the Doctor appeared to have drowned all difficulties in a bottle of "old Monongahela;" the latter was in a splendid humour, and seemed to have forgotten the toil and privation of the day's journey.

"Well, Charley, this is a delicious life!" exclaimed the Doctor, as he folded himself in his blanket and prepared for taking a good night's rest. "Pretty to eat and drink, and the best at that! Who would not trade such a life? To tell you the truth, Charley, I believe if I had such eat for six weeks, I would recover my lost flesh. Travelling in the sun is very debilitating; it affects the gastric functions very much; and I would advise you, my friend, for the good of your own health, to travel less and eat more!"

With this advice the Doctor turned over, gave a grunt or two, and was soon asleep; and in imagination was engaged the whole night in demolishing a huge mountain of fat and tender meat, that never seemed to diminish, notwithstanding the huge slices he stowed away in his stomach.

CHAPTER III.

THE STOLEN CHILD.

OUR party remained encamped for several days in this beautiful spot. There was nothing out hunting and fishing. The Captain's journal was weekly completed, and his time was taken up in making excursions with Fritz, and taking lessons in bird-hunting under his direction; he had even commenced to learn from a Yankee—though Fritz considered it no disgrace to be his master. Even the Doctor was at last satisfied with such "rascals living," as *Wichitarr* would say. The latter now seemed to have improved but very little with his journey; his countenance wore the same listless expression, and his frame was as tall, as wild, and as untamed as ever. The doctor had taken him under his special charge, yet, notwithstanding all his prescriptions of boiled bones, seasoned liver, roasted hump, and scores of yards of raw "bark," he remained as sickened as ever; until even the Doctor was at last forced to declare his case to be entirely incurable, and a regular case of *typhus*—a man that could eat, and never get the better of his *typhus*!

The boat, in the meantime, had sailed peacefully up the river; it was not even oppressive to the fat contentment of the doctor, and now they might now travel as much as they pleased; they would be able to undertake any business, as the rest of the last few days had entirely restored his strength. Accordingly, he now resolved to move up the river several days' journey, and then

another camp within a few miles of the Caches, where they would be near the Santa Fe trail, and would likewise have an abundance of wood and game, if the Indians had not been there before them.

The second day after they had removed their camp to this place was an eventful one in its consequences to more than one of our party. Their camping-place was in the bottom of a flat in the valley, opposite a couple of islands, standing half-way in the stream, which were thickly covered with a heavy growth of cottonwood and willow. In the rear of the camp, and not a mile distant, was a low range of hills, running parallel with the river, and losing themselves in the distance. The hills were shrouded in a heavy bank of clouds, whose gray looking mass indicated an approaching storm. Every thing was still and death-like. The Doctor, and his help, Zedekiah, had set fire to a large pile of dry wood, and broken chips, preparing to prepare a supper. The Captain was writing a few remarks in his journal, in which the barbarism of the Yankees was the principal subject; because the Doctor had called him an "ignorant fool," and Zedekiah followed up the remark, by calling something about "a fashion English fool, whose head was not as big as a bushel's." Norwood and Fritz were reclining on a couple of buffalo robes, spread out upon the grass, and trying plans for tomorrow's sport. Deek and Pasqual were down at the river, watching the animals; every thing was as quiet as death, and it was a hot Sabbath eve.

"Hark!" cried Fritz, springing to his feet; "did you hear a sound? There it is again!" he cried, as loudly and distinctly a sound was heard in the distance. Turning where the voice had proceeded, a solitary figure was discovered, standing on one of the narrow hills, in the rear of the camp.

"I know that man!" cried Fritz; "it's old Sam Cane, of the expedition. But what can he be doing away down here, I wonder? There's something wrong at camp!"

So saying, Fritz gave an answering shout, which, when the other had heard, he repeated loudly from his place of observation, and hastened toward Fritz, who started forward to meet him. They conversed a few minutes in deep confidential tones, and then when the other had said, Fritz appeared to be very much excited. They soon quickly approached the camp, and Norwood immediately perceived from the flashing eye and open expression of Fritz, that something unusual had taken place.

"I want to see you, Mr. Norwood," said Fritz; "I have just seen the Indians to-day, and they are all gone. This old man is one of the best hunters in the country, and I must have him for a hunter. I will be away for a day or two, anyway—and I may be killed. You must be careful—don't let my hair—my mane—be cut. Tell Mr. Norwood about it, while I'm getting ready."

"Well, Sib," said Norwood, "what's to be done to-day?—have we far to go until we get upon their trail?"

"They're not far away," replied the other, "only five or six hours' journey will bring us up on them, or say rather not Sib. We've taken a near cut on them; from the direction of their trail yesterday, they were steering for El Coyote, a small lake not many leagues from here. I expect they're resting themselves there; we will leave this in the evening, and catch up on them before daylight, so you have the whole day to rest in. It is a dangerous business; the Arapahoes always fight well; and there's so many of them we must potence on them in the night. Fritz and I have fought them often."

"Come! come!" said Norwood, "you talk as if you doubted my bravery. I have never yet been in an Indian or any other fight; but if I judge myself rightly, I will be able to take my share in the coming battle!"

"Yes! I can swear to your bravery!" chimed in Fritz. "I never saw one so cool as you were that day when you were surrounded by the Comanches. You acted just like an old hunter! Old Sib don't doubt you; he only wants to let you know that it's not as easy to be called a gay—this is the way the Arapahoes do you see!—my knife mark on my arm—was made by the knife of an Arapahoe—it's the only place on my arm has ever drawn from me!—Sib, do you remember that time when black Ben was with us, was up on the Snake-Hill Peak?"

"Yes! yes!" replied the other, "well do I recall that night—three of us and two horses—and whipped them all round! Yes, that was a fight!—Poor Ben! it's so long since I have met since that time! He was a fine fellow—great a horse-fighter—but he's done for now—maybe it's my turn to go now. But not, I hope, till I've got my arms back again—that I want you how soon old Sib goes under!"

"Come, cheer up!" said Fritz. "You and I have some money!—black days!—and many white ones too. I'll be back in a week!—I'll be back; and then we'll all go with you to the Comanches and celebrate your return with a grand banquet!"

In such conversation they walked away the hours till their sunset, when Sib moved off with three to four hundred horses were again saddled; and after examining their traces the three took their way across the desert to a plain some five or six leagues from El Coyote, where they hoped to meet the Indians.

It was probably two hours after sunset when our party again stopped. The moon was high in the heavens, and poured a flood of light upon the surrounding plain; and the stars, in any case, the appearance of the night. The sky showed a heavy, but in the west a low heavy cloud came creeping up, and it was beginning an approaching storm. Every thing was as quiet as itself; the sense of loneliness was too profound—**and a**
rain— a **whirv!**

Norwood, though possessing a full flow of spirits, and filled with the sanguine anticipations of youth, felt an inexpressible chill sweeping over him for which he could not account. It was not so much the sense of a doubtful and dangerous conflict with the Indians, but the awful stillness that over bore and over bore every thing, joined to the desolate appearance of the surrounding plain, which the light of the moon only served to make more ghastly. Even his two companions seemed, in a measure, to have partaken of his feelings; for, after taking the saddles from the horses, and letting them feed upon the short and dried-up grass, they threw themselves at full length upon the ground, and without a word spoken, seemed only intent upon their own thoughts. They did not sleep; for as Norwood reclined upon his saddle, he could see from their restless limbs that their minds were fixed intently upon their dangerous undertaking.

The hours dragged slowly on. Norwood knew they must be near the lake where the Indians were expected to be before long; and his companions were probably waiting till the moon would get low, ere they would again proceed. But before the night had half passed away, the sky was filled with black and angry-looking clouds, that moved like winged shadows, and, in their black flight, hiding both stars and moon from the earth.

"Now's the time," said Sib, springing from the ground; "it'll soon be dark enough for all we want; saddle your horses, and let us go you a league rather to a little hollow, only a half-mile from the spring, where you can leave them; we'll do all our fighting on foot."

"There's going to be a storm," said Fitz, as he pointed to the west, where a broad and milky mass, as solid in appearance as a wall, was appearing above the plain.

"So much the better," replied Sib; "they'll not expect visitors at such a time; and we'll be among them without their knowing any thing about it, until we choose to make ourselves known. Follow me," he continued, when he saw his companions hesitating, "don't lose yourselves in the dark, and be as quiet as possible."

After half-an-hour's travel they again stopped; but this time in a narrow depression, or hollow, which might have been formed in times long gone, by the waters of some stream. For in appearance it was like a channel hollowed out of the plain by the action of some current; but now, like the whole surrounding country, covered with the snow, yet without the least trace of water. Norwood and Fitz dismounted quietly, and having their horses saddled and bridled, disengaged them so that they could suddenly move, by the raising the head of one horse to the crupper of the other; and then, for fear of starting, pulled their reins in, so that in case of any alarm, they could not move to any distance. Their minds were again examined, and their caps put on. Knives were loosened, and

close to their right, which to Norwood seemed like the trampling of horses, and could be but a little way off; a sudden gust of the wind, for the moment, carried all other sounds away.

"Back, back!" said Sib, hurriedly, at the same time grasping Norwood by the shoulder, and forcing him along; "quick, for your lives!—the red devils are driving in their horses, and they'll be on us in a moment! Owgh!" he continued, after they had all retreated some twenty yards from their first position—"I thought we'd find them here; now I know where their camp is—it's not fifty yards from here, on the other side of the little lake—I could go into it with my eyes shut. The guards are drivin' in their horses, to keep them from bein' frightened away by the storm. It's well enough we heard them when we did, for we were right in their path. Squat yourselves, boys; the lightning might betray us. The storm'll delay us some, for it'll wake the Indians; and we must lay still awhile 'til they're asleep ag'in."

The storm now burst upon them with all its fury, and the quick, vivid flashes of lightning, running, as it upon the very ground, served to illumine the plain, and discovered to their eyes a large troop of horses but a few yards distant, which ten or twelve Indians were driving before them. The number and position of their tents were also easily distinguished; for their white frames served to concentrate the blue electric light that seemed to play in their very midst. The rain came down in one continued stream, and in an instant wet our adventurers to the skin and through. Norwood had never, in all his life, witnessed such a storm; and he gazed with something of awe upon the vast plain, illumined almost continually by the incessant lightning; and then the wind, raging and howling as if ten thousand spirits were at play, and the loud crash of the echoing timber—all served to make it one of the most fearful, such at the same time, grandest displays, he had ever witnessed.

After crawling for half an hour upon the half deluged plain, and the first violence of the storm in some measure abating, old Sib whispered for them to follow, and led off toward the Indians, sometimes walking erect, and again crawling upon his hands and knees. The lightning was now less frequent and vivid, but the violence of the wind and rain seemed to have increased, which would completely drown any noise they might accidentally make in their advance.

"Now, boys," whispered Sib, as he paused apparently on the outskirts of their encampment, "we must, by some means, find out in which of these tents my darling Rose is; when that's done, the battle is half over. Ugh! if she only know'd old Sib was about, we would have no difficulty in finding her out; but as it is, boys, we must do the best we can. But let me tell you

one thing—use the knife; it don't bark; you must only shoot when the Injins have discovered you, and then make as much noise as you can. I'm glad the lightning is going away, there'll be no danger of them skin' us, and I don't mean to leave much in this wind and rain. We're stuck on the edge of the spring—on the other side's the lodges; we must keep a little to the left; my bow, and the bows like mine as you own."

As all three moved on their hands and knees, one after another, in regular Indian file—Norwood bringing up the rear. In a few minutes, Sib was in bed, and motioning the other two to his side, pointed to the dim outline of a tent only a few paces distant. But scarcely had they come together, when a low howl was heard in the lodge, followed in an instant by the violent barking of a dog.

"We're discovered!" whispered Fritz.

"Heh!—my skin!" said Sib, at the same time putting his two hands to his mouth, he let forth a succession of quick, sharp yells, and finished by a long, drawn howl, as if coming from a wolf. The imitation was complete; Norwood started at the fidelity with which it was given, almost thinking that animal right to the skin. Sib's sublimation saved them from discovery. The deep, guttural yelp of an Indian was heard within the tent, bidding the dog be quiet. Every thing being again still, our adventurers moved on slowly, every man this day long on his locality, and continuing their course, in a short time found themselves right in the midst of the encampment; the distant and distant lightning gave them sufficient light to distinguish the white skins of the lodges on every side.

"Boys!" whispered Sib, as they all pressed, or walked, with their rifles on the wet grass, "nothing can be done till we know in which tent they keep Rose; there's no Injins moving tonight, 'cept them with the horses, and they're far enough off, so we've nothing to fear, unless we come across some of those cursed dogs. The only plan 'll be for us to creep from lodge to lodge, and try to find where my child is: which I think 'll not be difficult, as she always sleeps with her ears open, and the least noise 'll waken her. Fritz, do you go up among the trees on that side; I'll meet you at the upper end of the encampment. Stop at every one, and make it round like a snake, and peep it all round each tent, and if you hear a howl, go off a little distance and whoop like an owl—that 'll be my signal, and I'll join you. If you hear the same noise, come to me. As for you, Mr. Norwood, you can't assist us any now. The tent we see that tent only a few yards up there? That's the child's; it's always in the center of the camp. Go and shelter yourself behind it the best way you can, and on no account leave it till one of us comes for you. Good-by!"

The two immediately crawled off, according to arrangement, leaving Norwood entirely alone. He paused a while to listen,

But he could hear nothing of his companions: the wind and rain were too strong for any voice they might incidentally have uttered. He turned back, once or twice, he distinguished old Stibbs crouching on his hands and knees, with the constant humming of a mill-wheel directly behind the scene. Feeling himself a child by the side of the old man, Norwood determined to shelter himself as well as he could, in the best manner he could. Creeping cautiously to the designated ledge, which he could scarcely climb upon, without almost touching it, he endeavored to keep off the violence of the wind by placing himself as closely as possible beneath its shelter.

He was in some measure protected from the wind, but the rain came rapidly around the sides of the tent, and seemed to pour upon him with redoubled fury. The lodge appeared to be very large, and more than once did he wish himself under its protecting shelter. He waited for a long time, in the vain hope of hearing from his countrymen; but he could distinguish no sound, save the rushing of the tempest, which still labored on with undiminished fury. His situation was miserable in the extreme, and he could have endured no longer for the kindly shelter of his own home, now many leagues distant.

The old man became aware of something moving within the boat, so he sat with his back against it, and looking at-
tentionally toward the middle of skins right before him, as if some
one was standing on his back. Presently his ear to the side of the
boat, he heard the paddles set up; and after a few moments, a
swell, and of sweeping together of oars, and the blowing of a
paddle, all began handling a fire. Drawing his knee from
his mouth, he quickly and cautiously inserted its sharp point
into the side of the boat, and crawling forward along, made a
round circle, so wide he could distinctly spread his eye. At first
he could scarcely catch sight of anything; but in a little while he
noticed a dark object rolling over a few half-burnt coals, and
with great rapidity drawing them in to him. The fire appeared
to be very soft, and he now watched all the changes of
the process, as it would strike a blaze; a few sparks would fly
about, and many blows, and exploding all around the blowers
kept going only that almost as dark as it was before. Even
at last the patient, however provoked, could not stand that;
and saying a word or two, that no Newcomer was en-
tirely ignorant of such things, took the matter in which they were
engaged, and began to say what he thought best, and finally to
say that one of the three who had got up and going to
the end of the boat, returned with a quantity of stones,
which being thrown upon the coals, sent out into a clear,
bright flame. As the Indian stopped to feed the fire with a few
small sticks and some dry bark-chips, he saw she was an old
woman, well-looking square; and in her present occupation

looking like a witch busily at work over some midnight incantation.

The apartment into which Norwood was looking was only a few feet square, and appeared to be separated from the body of the lodge by low hangings of dressed deer-skin. But that which most took his eye, was a bed of buffalo robes in the far corner of the recess, on which some person appeared to be sleeping. The shadow of the old squaw being thrown upon the sleeper, he could not, for some time, get a fair view of what had at first so taken his attention. He felt certain, however, that the person sleeping was she whom they were after; he had nothing as yet upon which he could justify his conclusion, but his heart seemed to whisper that it must be Rose.

CHAPTER IV.

THE RESCUE.

THE old squaw, having at length succeeded in starting her fire, squatted herself before it, and rocking herself backward and forward, commenced a low, humming tune, which sounded in Norwood's ears like the words, "he yi, he, he, he!—he yi, he, he, he!" which were chanted alternately in a low and high tone, with a sing-song sameness. The side of the old bag was toward Norwood, and he could not expect to do much without being observed. Looking closer, he saw that by moving his position on the outside, so as to bring himself in a line with the back of the squaw, he would be much nearer the sleeper's couch, where he might ascertain if his presentment was not correct, without much danger of observation. Moving quietly a few paces to the left, he knelt down, and with cautious efforts succeeded in a few moments in shifting the side of the tent, so that he could crawl through with perfect ease. Being afraid that the entrance of the wind and rain would alarm the old crone, he divested himself of his well-worn hunting shirt, and with a couple of pins, succeeded in fastening it over the entrance, making a complete flap or screen, so as to keep out the cold, damp air.

Stealing his head through as gently as possible, he saw the squaw still at the fire, and humming away at her song; her back was toward him, and he could therefore watch her with some safety, for that corner of the tent was darkened by the shadow of the old woman's body. Leaving his rifle without, he worked his body by little and little, until his whole person was within the tent. He now became aware that he was observed, for he noticed a tall, dark eye gazing upon him from under a buffalo robe, and watching his every movement. It belonged to the occupant of the couch, which was now almost within reach of

his arm. The calm, lustrous eye fixed upon him satisfied him at once. It was Rose, and there she lay, gazing into his face, without any alarm or astonishment, as if his advent had been long expected. Norwood felt in a moment that every thing was understood. Worming himself along, till he came alongside the couch, he paused a while, considering what to do. The buffalo-robe that partly covered the head of the captive was gently removed, and Norwood saw two large, starlike eyes gazing intently upon his own; at the same time a childlike hand was thrust forth and pointed to a burial that lay on a mat close at the foot of her couch. The look that accompanied this action expressed every thing that Norwood desired to know. Possessing himself of the rope, he crawled up gently behind the old hag, and with a quick and dextrous maneuver, threw her upon her face, at the same time thrusting the corner of her old and greasy blanket far into her mouth. In an instant she was bound, hand and foot, and lay helpless and bewildered upon the ground. When this was accomplished, Norwood listened a moment if any of the inhabitants of the lodge were stirring; but every thing was still. Going back to the couch, he found its occupant sitting erect; wrapping a robe round her slight form, to serve as a protection from the rain, he drew her with him—and the two soon stood safe without the tent.

The wind had in a measure subsided, but the rain, as if to make amends, appeared with greater violence. Sheltering his charge with the buffalo-robe, Norwood, in a few words, whispered, "that her father and Fritz were somewhere about, and that it would be necessary to remain where they were, till their position could be ascertained, so as to join them without danger of going astray."

His hunting shirt was again donned; and taking up his rifle, he waited anxiously for some noise from his companions; but notwithstanding all his attention, he could hear nothing but the ceaseless patter of the heavy rain. Now that his errand was accomplished, he felt anxious to leave his dangerous position, for there was danger every moment of being discovered; but even if he knew the direction to their rendezvous, it would not be proper to leave without communicating with his two fellow-adventurers. He whispered his feelings to Rose, who, like himself, was coquishly nestling in his bosom.

"Stop," said she, "I will call them."

At the same time, a soft, clear, bird-like sound came from her throat, distinct, yet far away, as if it might be in the air, or on the water; so sweet and quick that the ear could scarcely tell whether it was really a sound or not, and yet so loud that it could be heard far above the tempest; to Norwood it seemed like the voice of some invisible being, so pure, so heavenly; or like the sound often felt in dreams, which comes and goes like a soft vein of light, scarce seen till it is lost.

"It's a stampede!" whispered Rose; "don't you hear the hoofs rattling on the ground?"

And indeed it was. Norwood could compare it to nothing but the rumble of a train being alar, and increasing at every interval. The whole earth appeared to shake under the tread of the thousands of hoofs; and round and clear above the terrific noise the two columns of smoke and steam, leading the animals to some great speed. Onward came the maddened troops—thousands and thousands—their stampede swept they on—beating over hill and dale, and trampling to the earth whatever was in their way. Like a whirlwind passed they by, leaving in their wake the mangled bones of many of their number, blood and the traces of their progress.

Norwood listened until the sound of that living torrent had entirely faded away in the distance. He had never before heard anything that excited such a feeling of the fearful, and it recalled to him the old story of his young companion to rescue him from the yet existing danger of his position, and the necessity of still further exertion. Supporting Rose with his arm, he rose quickly up, as well as he could throw in the deep darkness, to determine what way to where their horses had been left. But ever moving round him round for half an hour, he found that he was completely lost; he could see nothing of the kind which was his only landmark; nor could he hear any response from his two companions, though he shouted several times to the full extent of his voice. Nothing was to be heard but the dull continuous driving of the rain. As a last resort, he commenced to run his rifle, but the charge was wet and would not explode; he drew his pistol for the same purpose, but Rose stopped him.

"It is no use," said she, "that would be dangerous; your firing would certainly be heard by my father, but then it would also serve us well to guide the Indians, and we would certainly be taken. As it is, we must make as much haste as possible, so as to be far enough out of sight of the Arapahoes by the time they discover us, or we will certainly be lost. My father knows very well that we have escaped; and if he can find out us tonight he will certainly hunt us out to-morrow; but if the worst should happen, we can certainly find our way on foot to your camp near the Arapahoes. Come, let us go; I think daylight is not far off yet, and we must put two or three leagues behind us before it comes."

Norwood felt that this advice was the best, and taking a short cut through the woods he went away from the Indian camp, leaving the trail straight on their dusty path through the trees and bushes.

As dawn was rising, there were passed to the camp of the Arapahoes a number of the new sets that had been sent by the Captain after the departure of Norwood and the others.

ers. The Captain felt proud of his delegated authority, and he took the present favorable opportunity to vent his spleen upon the Doctor in more ways than one. He would have also liked very much to treat 'Ziah in the same way; but there was something in the Yankee's eye that told him there would be danger in meddling with him. They managed, however, to get along very well till the night came on; when it became necessary to detail a guard to keep watch upon the animals. Now the Doctor had always been remarkably good in taking his share of the night-watch, and he would certainly not have objected at the present time, had not the Captain, in dividing the night into two watches, of five hours each, forgot to include himself as one of the sentries.

"No, sir!" exclaimed the latter, in reply to the Doctor's expostulation, "I was left in charge of the camp, and I shall be obeyed; and who ever heard of the commander taking upon himself the duties of the plebeian soldier?"

"Why, sir!" replied the Doctor, "Charley Norwood did not think so; he performed more camp-duties than any of us, though he was our captain."

"I don't care what Mr. Norwood did!" exclaimed the indignant Captain; "though he saw fit to do these things, I don't see it fit for me to do them. And let me tell you another thing, sir: I never soiled my hands with any kind of work until I came into your confounded country; and as soon as I can get clear of it, I will!"

"There, now!" replied the somewhat heated Doctor, "there is a cockney for you—one of the real bull-dozers! I wish to gracious you were out of the country, sir; you're like the toad, sir—you leave your slime wherever you go. You talk of never having soiled your hands!—why, you little wart you, a white man would be contaminated by your very touch!"

The Captain felt himself terribly excited; his little person seemed to dilate with the indignant swell of his feelings. To the last taunt of the Doctor's he could not or would not reply; probably this was, however, owing to the sight of 'Ziah's long and solemn-looking nose appearing suddenly over the Doctor's shoulder, when he thought that personage to be out of hearing, and which now, in the gray twilight, seemed like a threatening specter to the doughty Captain. At this sudden appearance the latter personage turned away, and left the Doctor master of the field.

However, by the intervention of 'Ziah—who it is thus proved a real peace-maker—things were so far arranged that the Captain consented to take his share of the night-watch—which was all the Doctor wanted—and the two finished their contest as usual, by drinking each other's health in a glass of good old Monongahela—an article with which the Doctor had taken good care to furnish himself before leaving the States.

The night passed away without any occurrence whatever to disturb them; and when the morning sun rose beautiful and bright, the five sat down to their early breakfast; and never did hot coffee or broiled buffalo-meat taste with a sweeter relish. After finishing his meal, the Captain took out his book and noted down a few of his observations, while the Doctor took a stroll along the river to botanize, and perhaps, also, to quicken his stomach by a little exercise, so as to do better justice to his dinner.

It was a lovely morning; the air was fresh and invigorating, and a gentle wind rustling the leaves on the island trees, gave a lively sound to the usual stillness of the air. The river flowed along, with its yellow waters curling and eddying in many a pool. Every thing breathed with the spirit of peace; and the Doctor's feelings, as a matter of course, were in unison. Silently he wandered down the bank of the lonely river, his eye at one moment watching the rustling waters as they sped singing by the projecting sod—at another, gladdened with the sight of strange and gaudy flowers, waving their heads amid the tufted grass; and then pausing to hear the shrill bark of the prairie-dog, as he watched the intruder from his cone-like house. No wonder he forgot himself in the calm enjoyment of his walk; and when he at last stopped, with his hands full of curious plants, and looked around, he saw that he had wandered out of sight of camp; but this caused him no uneasiness; for as he looked up and down the river, and on every side, he could see nothing but a few old bulls feeding in the distance. As he turned to retrace his steps as slowly as he came, he was startled by the quick, shrill rattle of a snake right beside him. Looking down, he saw a large rattlesnake coiled up, and with fiery eyes, and head advanced, daring him to the encounter. The round, full eyes of the Doctor sparkled—he wanted the skin of a snake of this species for his collection, and here was a glorious specimen. Laying his flowers on one side, and picking up a dry stick that the river had floated down and kept waiting in one of its eddies near the shore, he soon stretched it down upon the grass.

How long the Doctor had been engaged flaying the snake he knew not; for in such an occupation, so gratifying to his scientific mind, time would flow heedlessly by. How long he had been engaged he knew not, but certainly it was a considerable time, when, just as he was about rising to depart, he was alarmed by hearing something close behind him. Now the grass around where he was sitting was very high and thick, quite overshadowing the Doctor's head; and when he turned his face toward the approaching noise he could not see any thing. The first idea that struck the Doctor's mind, was, that it was an Indian; and by squatting close to the ground, he might not be observed. Acting upon this suggestion, he laid himself

"this all comes of my love for science! I ought to have a monument erected to my memory when I die! But what if this man takes a notion to examine my construction—to dissect me with those clumsy hands! I'll be a monument then myself—A monument to my stupidity, to wander so far away with a woman for a reason! Please on the back, I say! Is he going to stand there all day, gazing as if he never before saw a doctor?"

But now, listening to all the Doctor's looks of concern, and seeing the bell stand there, fixed and immovable as before, the Doctor began to think; he began to wonder what he should do. A sudden thought, like the dawn of hope, came across his mind. Moving backward by little and little, keeping his eyes at the same time steadily fixed upon those of his opponent, he at last stood upon the very edge of the river; farther back there was not. Now the Doctor was going to try another plan—rather a dangerous one, if not to be employed; he had sometimes read of a method used in fighting cross-bow and Viking ships, and he saw no reason why it should not be practiced as successfully on horse. With a bound and a deep cry, however, he charged this whole array of battle; with him in this reckless flight, in a moment his rear was made the van, and he felt as if he had not been in the campaign. A shout was raised, and he thrust forward to take his share in the victory. It was a military maneuver; General Scott could not have done it better. However, for fear the doctor might get too much credit to the Doctor for this splendid maneuver of making the rear the front, and that, too, done in an emergency, it ought to be stated that he had served three campaigns in the army, as second of a regiment, under the particular command of General Morris.

This change of position gave the Doctor a decided advantage, and his opponent seemed greatly vexed to retreat. The Doctor was quick to observe these manifestations of confusion, and he seemed to follow up his advantage, by attacking slowly and cautiously to the attack. No wonder the lady was taken what she considered the sudden metamorphosis before him. The Doctor was now upon his horse's neck, and he could tell his opponent's every movement, like the wind, and his two eyes looking through the window of his horse's head, as if they were the eyes of a hawk, were fixed upon the head of his adversary. He could see every movement of his opponent, and he was like a hawk, looking at a hawk, looking at a hawk.

His opponent, however, was not to be so easily taken. He seemed to have a certain amount of skill, and he was apparently so much more, he moved a few steps; he moved a few steps. The Doctor, who had followed him up, was now in a position to attack. It was a dangerous move to venture too near.

"Boh!" yelled the Doctor.

But the bull only shook his head.

"Boh! boh! boh!" yelled the other, at every cry raising one of his legs and kicking out violently into the air; while, for a further accompaniment, his hands kept a constant agitation among the grass.

This was too much for the bull to take. He considered it a regular challenge; shaking his head and bellowing his displeasure, he was springing upon the Doctor, when the sharp crack of a rifle was heard at a little distance, and the large beast fell forward upon his head, and rolled over dead upon the grass.

The Doctor owed his preservation to 'Ziah, who had come upon the two belligerents entirely unexpected, and, seeing the violent defeat of his friend, had not delayed a moment in taking his part. The Doctor, though profuse in his gratitude, could not help feeling confused at being seen in such a questionable position, even though it was by 'Ziah, whose knowledge of science went no further than his nose.

"What in the name of wonder, Doctor, were you doing on your all-fours?" asked 'Ziah, after he had leisurely seated himself on the head of the dead buffalo. "At first I thought it was a regular set-to between a white bear and a bull, for I could only see a part of the strange-looking animal, 'less the grass was high. So I watched for a long time, and was determined to see them fit it out without helping wun or t'other, for you see I'm always for fair play; but when I heard your voice I waked up, and I jist give it to the old feller right through the heart."

"'Ziah," replied the Doctor, as he stood panting from his exertions, "I don't want you to mention this little circumstance to the Captain, or he'll certainly write a chapter about it in his lying journal. I was just trying an experiment, 'Ziah—nothing but an experiment I can assure you—experiment is the life of science, and we wise men are oftentimes put into strange positions, which might seem unaccountable to the ignorant, but are perfectly apparent to the learned."

With this explanation 'Ziah appeared satisfied, for he had a wonderful opinion of the Doctor's knowledge; and however he thought within himself, outwardly he showed, by his demeanor, that he was fully aware of the impressive nature of the Doctor's experiment. Helping the Doctor to gather up his wilted flowers and weeds, the two returned to camp; where, for the remainder of the day, the Doctor appeared to be busy drying his rattlesnake-skin, which had been procured under such disadvantageous circumstances.

CHAPTER V.

FAINT, YET PURSUING.

THE morning succeeding the events narrated in our former chapter, dawned fresh and fair. All traces of the storm had disappeared from the heavens; and when the sun rose, it was as if upon a new creation, when every thing was bright and beautiful. The grass seemed to have taken a new start, for the parched-up ground had drank a sufficient draught of water; and the sickening verdure of yesterday was lost in the bright green of to-day. A soft, mild breeze came up with the sun, and poured new life upon the earth. The drops of rain hung thick and heavy on the tender blades of grass, and in the rising sun, gleamed like myriads of diamonds sparkling in their light green settings.

Norwood and his young charge were alone upon the plain. He could hear or see nothing of his two companions; and though he had fired his pistol several times when day came on, yet he could get no response. Still, they continued on their course, directing their way in a north-easterly direction, so as to strike the Arkansas somewhere near to the encampment—at every step hoping to come across some appearance of Fritz or Sib. But the sun came up, and climbed some distance on her daily course, and no living object met their anxious eyes. The plain stretched solitary and silent on every side. Norwood judged that he must be several leagues from the Indian camp, and consequently felt but little fear of being pursued, or if pursued, but little chance of being found in such a vast wilderness. Coming near a small pool of water which the last night's rain had formed, he resolved to rest a few hours, in order to let his young companion be better prepared for the journey on foot to the Arkansas, which now appeared to be inevitable.

"Come, Rose," said he, sitting down upon the margin of the pool—"Come, sit down here by my side, and rest your weary limbs. I am certain you are very much fatigued, for I feel as if it would be impossible to go much farther without rest. Besides, my clothes are still well soaked with rain; and a couple of hours' exposure in this fine sun will make them more comfortable. Come, take this buffalo-robe off your shoulders, and I will spread it upon the grass, so that you will have something to sit on."

Rose did as she was desired, and Norwood now, for the first time, had an opportunity of remarking the small yet homely proportioned figure of his charge. She was dressed in the costume of the senoritas of New Mexico; for old Sib, in his ar-

annual journeys to Santa Fe, always returned with two or three *cañigas*, or petticoats, and a *rebozo* or two, which he obtained in exchange for some of his beaver-skins. A beautiful pair of beaded moccasins covered her tiny feet, and the colorful and ornate *cañiga*, only falling half way below her knee, showed the delicately-turned ankle, without a covering of any kind. A long, clean chemise, fastened round the throat with a row of small silver buttons, covered the upper part of her graceful person, with the exception of her arms, which were naked; and on her head was the graceful *rebozo*, of an agreeable hue, which hung in rich folds over her left shoulder, and flowing almost to her knees. Her complexion was of the clear Mexican, in which everything is chaste and subdued; with just enough blood in the cheeks to be faintly visible, like a rose seen through a diamond veil. She was very young—not more than twelve summers had ripened on her brow—and though her form and features were those of a child, yet in the full dark eye there was a gleam occasionally that told of an older spirit, rugged amid the solitudes of the wilderness.

Norwood gazed upon her with something of astonishment. He had seen faces that were fairer, eyes of a deeper blue, and hair of a finer gloss; but he had never seen one that combined so much of the beautiful with the splendid; and appeared to him almost like the incarnation of a beautiful creature, both so enchanting, and so fitting with the glories of the country around. Her whole countenance was like one of those star-strewn lakes, that reflect the clouds, the stars, and every thing that moves across its glassy surface. Norwood could scarcely think it possible that the baby-like creature beside him was the outspanner of the rough mountain-trail, and her home among the Ancho Seven characteristic, but very pretty Mexican, in every particular. Norwood, whose curiosity and interest were very much excited concerning this wild mountain flower, determined to ask more particularly of her notes and habits.

"Well, Rose," he began, "how far is your mountain home from this?"

"Oh, it is many long leagues away," she replied, with a softness of voice, as if murmuring for its quiet and even tones; "it is many days' journey from here, in one of the narrow valleys of the Wet Mountains. Oh! it is a beautiful place; and if you should ever come to see, you would never want to leave it."

"But is it not very likely to be forever shut up by those mountains?" asked Norwood; "I suppose you are but a prisoner in that wild region, and they are all wild as the country surrounding you."

"Ah! no," she replied, "I don't think it is so. I have seen the wild flowers in summer; and in the winter I have the goats and mountain sheep, and then the hunters with their fire at night, and tell me stories of the beautiful scenery of a winter."

far, far beyond this plain, where there are such grand cities and so many lovely people. I can't help but dream of those things he mentions; and then I wish to be with my thoughts. But when he tells me of so much unhappiness, and of so much wickedness in that distant land, I am thankful that my home is where it is. Oh! sir, if you would only live there with us," she continued, taking one of his hands in both of hers, "I am sure it would be much happier: for then, when my father would be out with his traps, you would stay with me, and tell me of things that sometimes come in my dreams, or haunt me when alone upon the mountains. I know you're from that grand world of which I have heard so little. And though my father often told me that all the people therein were bad, I am sure that you are not—my heart tells me you are not—and I will like you so much, only come with us to the mountain land."

This was the language of nature; and Norwood's whole heart answered the appeal of those expressive eyes and pleading words. Child as she was, and nurtured in loneliness, far removed from any of her kind, her soul was but the reflex of all that was intense and beautiful.

"Ah!" sighed Norwood to himself, "what a glorious creature is here lost to the world. But rather it shall be thus, than that a gleam of that angel purity be quenched in poisoning her heart in vice."

"Yes, Rose," he continued, aloud, "I will certainly see you in safety to your own house; but what sadly have you that the Indians will not return again, and carry you off a second time?"

"The Indians did not never see any harm," she replied; "they came across me by chance, and picked me up as they would any other stray creature. Though they worked me hard and long, I was well treated. It is not likely they will return, for they can hope for nothing from my capture."

After a short pause she again spoke; but in a low and reproachful voice, as if communing with herself.

"And yet I have stolen much from the Indians; but that was long before—I am sure I know not when."

"Your father?" exclaimed Norwood; "did not Sir your parent?"

"Ah!" replied Rose, raising her large eyes, now humbled with shame, "Sir is more than a parent—he brought me from the Comanches when I was a little thing, an infant lying with story-stones. And he's been so kind to me—the only one I ever remember to have been kind; and I have loved him—He is the only one I ever loved—and he calls me his daughter—the dear little Rose! He is my only friend—my father!"

Norwood was deeply and sympathetically affected with the pathos with which this was uttered. Her whole history ran in a flash before him. Sudden from some one of the villages on the Rio

Grande—her parents probably massacred—adopted by her captors, or intended as the slave of some Comanche chief—then purchased by Sib for a plug of tobacco, or some other trifle, and transferred to his hut in the mountains, to enliven his declining days—all this was read in a moment, in the moistened eye and hanging head of his beautiful companion. Norwood now resolved within himself, that money, nor time, nor trouble, should deter him from hunting up her parents, if yet living, and restoring their long-lost child, providing he could get any clue whatever to direct his search.

"Come, Rose," said he, leaning her head upon his breast; "don't grieve—we will all love you. But, do you remember any thing whatever of the time you were taken away by the Comanches?"

"Ah, no!" she replied; "it is long, long ago. Yet, sometimes, as if in a dream, a dim figure seems hovering over me, with eyes and face something like my own, and whispers of some other home, where are vineyards beside a river, that winds through broad, green *mesquitas*. Then, when I try to listen more distinctly, every thing is gone, and I am sadder than before."

The two then continued silent for a long time. Norwood was thinking how he might restore the stolen child to her parents; and if no parents were to be found, why then he dreamed of taking her to his own home, where he would be father and brother to the lost one; and this last thought, it must be confessed, was a pleasing one. Rose was apparently communing with the past, and endeavoring to catch another glimpse of that dream that her heart said was her mother! The reverie was at last broken by Norwood.

"Come, my child," said he, "come—lay yourself down upon this robe and sleep a while. I have my rifle to put in order, and will watch for a few hours; when, if we hear nothing from Sib or Fritz, we must set out alone, and find our road to the Arkansas the best way we can."

Rose, as obedient as any child, did as she was directed, and soon appeared to be in a sound sleep. Norwood, while usually employed in cleaning his rifle, could not but often think of her who was so providentially put under his charge; and more than a dozen times did his gentle hands arrange the robe, so as to shade the sun from off her face. He was certain he had never seen any face so beautiful; and, childish as it was, there so full of the deep, impassioned feelings of a girl's heart. There was a soul within that form whose dawn had already revealed the promise of a glorious fulfillment.

Having succeeded in extracting the wet charge from the rifle, and loaded it afresh, he seated himself at a little distance, and began to think of the distance yet to be traversed, and the difficulties yet to be undergone, before he could place Rose in

safety within the shelter of his camp on the Arkansas. Insensibly his eyes closed, his head drooped, and a slumber deep and refreshing crept upon him.

When he awoke, the sun was nearly at his zenith, and he found his young companion wide awake and sitting by his side, shading the sunbeams from his eyes by the position of her body. In a few minutes they set out upon their long and lonely journey.

Rose was happy and cheerful, and, walking along-side of Norwood, kept him in continued conversation. She had so many questions to ask about the beautiful world that he came from, and so much to tell him of the happy times they would have in the mountains, that the hours passed away most delightfully; and neither seemed to imagine that they were upon the wild and lonely desert, far away from the succor of their friends.

Thus they continued with but little intermission, until the sun was beginning to dip his disk behind the level prairie; when Norwood, thinking it was time to stop for the night, picked out a place where the grass was thick and green, and gathering with great difficulty an armful of buffalo-chips, struck a fire, and leaving Rose beside it, started out with the vain hope of shooting a buffalo or antelope for supper. But, after traveling round and round until it began to grow dark, he was forced to return without even seeing a living creature. But few buffaloes frequented this region, for he could see but few of their traces; and what was still more gloomy, was the anticipation of traveling all day to-morrow without any thing to eat. For, even if they were on the direct road to the Arkansas, Norwood felt that it was but a bare possibility of coming in sight of any game until in the valley of the river. He felt weak and faint, not having eaten any thing since the evening preceding; and how must his tender companion suffer, who had also been so long without food. It was with much chagrin he retraced his way back to the fire, and communicated to Rose the result of his foray.

"Never mind," said she, smiling; "I feel so happy, now, that I have no room for hunger:—happy, because I shall soon see my father; and also, because you will come with us to the mountains, where you will see my beautiful mountain gods. Yes," she continued, with a sparkling eye, "and I'll take you away up among the mountains, and show you such beautiful flowers!—and I'll bring you to the boiling fountain, and tell you the story that the Indians have told about its wonderful waters. Oh, sir!—I'll show you so many things you never dreamed of; and I'm sure, when you see them all, you will never want to leave us!"

Norwood, who felt that he could never tire when listening to her innocent prattle, seated himself beside her, and asked her

many questions about her manner of living, her thoughts, her feelings, and every thing that could give him an insight into her character. He certainly found her to be a wonderful creature—a being far removed from the clutter of busy life—who had grown among the vast solitudes of nature—where solitude alone had been her instruction, filling her mind with beautiful, bright visions, and a longing for something yet to be seen. Her soul had expanded with the busy thoughts engendered by her solitary life, and had far outgrown her years. Every thing was to her at once a mystery and a pleasure. The stars at night among the cedars; the mountain swelling with the thunder's voice; the quiet valley and the rushing stream; the heavy winter and the summer sky; birds, trees, leaves and flowers—all were but well-loved voices, yet with a language was of things she wished, yet feared, to know—things that were not visible to the mortal sense, but to the spirit came the mysteries of another world. Her soul was like the mountain lake, whose clear breast the slightest breath would ripple and throw up smiling thoughts, like waves, until the water would be alive with motion and with meaning. And yet, her life was not all dreams; for dreams of that past world permeated all her soul with a tender melancholy. Dreams of her parents, whom she knew not; of her home, whose ways she knew not; of childhood, and where passed? These came to her like a shadow, yet faint and thin, which the first sun beam would dissipate. For life was a joyous being; and the cloud that came to her or crossed her spirit was but as a veil, which did not hide, but made every thing of a tenderer, clearer light.

With what ease did Norwood smooth the robe for her feet, and wrap her here and there in it, with her head resting upon his knee, for a pillow, watched her up and down, until she fell asleep, like a shadow, still upon him, and then, when her eyes were closed, turned his to the stars, and thought they were not so beautiful as the sparkling eyes of the child in his life.

It was a clear, moonlight night; nothing was to be seen but the silvery glow of the stars and the moon. I was alone and looking north for Norwood. His thoughts for a moment were kept awake—those of his home, of the future, of the past, of his situation; and then his face of Rome, with its features so calmly beside him. But when day dawned, these were fair, he was asleep too, and his youthful head was upon my hands, and lying near to Rome's; his brown locks had mingled with the dark hair of her lighter life. What were dreams and what was with each other? Rome's at last, was of him—and him alone.

Long before the sun was up, they were again on their journey. The plain still stretched its undulating surface before them. Nothing was to be seen or heard—stars and clouds were everywhere. The small pools that they met with

yesterday in great abundance, and which were formed by the preceding rain, were now disappearing, being absorbed by the thirsty ground, and dried up by the warm rays of the sun; so that, in addition to hunger, they were also to suffer from want of water. It was in vain that he cast his eyes continually on every side, hoping that fortune would favor him with the sight of a buck or antelope; no such animal appeared—not even the wolf of the preceding night could be discerned. Norwood thought not of himself—all his feelings were centered in the sufferings of his delicate companion; who, though apparently full of hope and cheeriness, was but veiling her sensations under the assumed look of joy. Norwood supported her with his arm; her walk was yet firm and steady; but as the sun grew warm, he felt her firm footing become unsteady, though her words and looks were still of hope and joy. He was aware that she would soon be too weak to walk, unless something could be got to strengthen her. Placing her upon the buffalo robe which he spread out upon the grass, he told her to rest herself, while he would take a short walk upon the prairie to look for game.

But after walking for an hour in a circular course, he had to return without either seeing water or game. By this time the sun was in the middle of his course, and his eyes began to feel sore and smart upon the plain. Norwood felt his own strength giving way, and it was with a deep depression of spirits he again seated his arm round Rose and started. However, his hopes were soon kindled by the words of his companion, who, still talking with enthusiasm, still talked of the happy times they were to have when once they reached her home in the mountains. Norwood was now certain that, if upon the right course, he would be able to reach the Arkansas by sunset; and even if it were not in the middle of the day, it would not matter much, for all kinds of prairie game were to be found in great abundance everywhere along the valley of the river. Cheering his companion with these anticipations, they walked along with quicker steps; but soon the strength of Rose gave way entirely, and she sank from his arm, helpless and dead, upon the grass.

"Rose!" said he, kneeling down beside her. "cheer up; it can't be far to the river, where we will have plenty of every thing we want; cheer, but not take your eyes from mine, you know I am here, and I am coming forward to carry you to the place yet remaining."

"Don't" replied Rose, "I am stronger in spirit, I cannot give, but my limbs are weak, but you rest me awhile, and I think I will be able to walk much further."

But this proved a most fatal mistake. It was necessary for him to leave her as he could do nothing more for her. The very fragrant form of his companion lay upon the grass, and he carried her with him, and he could do nothing more for her.

way. At every step he expected to see something that would give him cause for hope, and at every step he was disappointed. The boundless desert still stretched itself unbroken and solitary before him. Rose lay nestling on his breast, as if her hopes, her thoughts, were all in him. Her beauty and her helplessness gave him renewed energy. Mile after mile was travelled, and still he flagged not; he was himself astonished at his tireless strength. Then again he was alarmed at the appearance of Rose; her eyes were sunken, and had lost all that radiance which always made Norwood think of stars; and her full, rosy cheeks were pale and hollow; but that which was the most changed was her voice, so rich, so full, so musical, now so husky and low, and sounding like the notes of a broken viol. And yet she smiled so sweetly in his face, and talked such hopeful words, that his very soul was touched, and he almost felt as if she were some beautiful immortal spirit whom fate had given to his arms.

But something in the distance now attracted all his attention—there were living creatures in the wilderness besides themselves, for, far away before him, just breaking the horizon's edge, were several dark, tiny objects, moving toward them apparently with great rapidity, for at every moment they grew larger and larger, and more distinct. When yet at a great distance, Norwood's keen eye soon detected what they were. A large troop of wild horses were galloping along, rejoicing in their strength and freedom. Onward they came, as if to gaze upon these intruders upon their own wild pastures. Coming till within a hundred yards, they stopped, and with ears pricked, necks and starting eyes, stood for a moment looking upon our travellers, then, wheeking, as if satisfied with their inspection, they galloped away on their course, their flowing manes and flowing tails streaming upon the wind.

There was something cheering to both Rose and Norwood in this exhibition of the wild children of the desert; it was looking upon life again; and hope that was almost gone, darted vividly before them. Norwood felt renovated, and after a few moments' rest, again took Rose in his arms, and started confidently forward. This time hope did not deceive; for after a half-hour's walk, he found himself suddenly as on the verge of a tremendous precipice, caused by a deep depression of the plain, as if it had been scooped out in ages long past, for a channel to some great river. This chasm was scarcely fifty yards across from the level on which he stood to the verge beyond, and so level and unbroken was the plain on each side, that a person might almost walk into it without being aware of its existence. Looking down into the fissure, Norwood thought that he distinguished a pool of water, but at an awful depth below. The bottom lay in a deep, dark, shadow; it was almost like looking into the bottom of a well, so dim and dismal did every thing appear. Yet there was water below!—this news was indeed cheering, but to descend where

he was, the almost perpendicular wall of the chasm, was not to be hoped for. Yet Norwood well knew that there must be a passage down to the water somewhere near; the troop of wild horses must have crossed this mighty rent in the earth at some point; for, as far as his eye could carry on either hand, he could see its dark shadow winding like a huge black snake across the plain. Leaving Rose sitting on the grass, he hastened along its edge to find some place where he could descend with safety. After walking a short distance, he found the wished-for path which had been worn deeply into the dry, hard side of the gorge, by the feet of numberless animals that had made this their well-known crossing-place from one plain to the other. Returning with eager haste, he again took the form of the uncomplaining child in his arms, and, after a toilsome and dangerous descent of several hundred feet, found himself beside the long-hoped-for spring.

But scarcely had they quenched their thirst with the cool, fresh water, when they were startled by a shout on the plain above. Looking up—and there, almost overhead, was the figure of some one gazing down upon them. Norwood sprang for his rifle; but almost instantly Rose cried out:

“We are saved!—we are saved! There’s my father—and Fritz, too, is with him!”

And so indeed it was Fritz and Sib, who now made the silence ring with their hearty shouts, as they came bounding down the precipitous path; and then what a joyous meeting on all sides! Sib and Fritz first embracing Rose, and then wringing Norwood’s tingling hand in regular succession, until they had saved each a dozen times. Explanations were soon made; and it is enough to say, that knowing from the alarm in the Indian camp that Norwood was discovered, and Sib having heard the delicate call of Rose, knew that she was with him—then, to create as much confusion as possible, in order to distract the attention of the savages from the pursuit, the two broke in among the horses and succeeded in frightening them, so that they dashed through the encampment, overturning every thing in their course. Then they hunted out the redskins, but not finding Norwood there, waited for his appearance till after daylight, when they were forced to leave, for fear of being discovered by the Indians.

They knew that Norwood and Rose had both escaped, and were out somewhere upon the plain. Their business then was to hunt them up; but after circling round and round, the whole day, they could discover no “sign” whatever. And it was not till some time in the forenoon of the second day, that they came across the fire that Norwood had kindled the preceding night, which was the first clue they had, and which Sib followed up with the surety of a bloodhound, until it led them to the present spot, where they were discovered.

All their sufferings were forgotten, in the joy of an meeting with their friends. The two horses which Fritz led on the plain above were brought down and petted; and old Sib, with a light and joyous heart, shouldered his "old man" and after being gone for half an hour to the river, returned, bearing on his shoulder a young antelope that he had killed, which, with Fritz's assistance, was soon roasted over a large fire of buffalo-chips. Norwood and Rose made a delicious supper after their two long days' fast, and the night closed upon as happy a group as ever assembled together in that wild and lonely land.

CHAPTER VI.

THE DAY OF RECKONING.

THE next evening, our now joyous party arrived in sight of their camp on the Arkansas. Fritz had given his horse to Rose, who had already, in a measure, recovered her former cheerfulness and vivacity, and now delighted the whole party by her happy looks and glad words. Old Sib could scarcely contain his delight, in once more seeing his "little girl," and affectionately called her. The whole day he never left her side, but trotted along at her horse's head, and went on incessantly saying a thousand different things, sometimes if he never stopped the listening to himself; for according to his own words he was "so happy," which every one could see in his sparkling looks, and rattling talk. Norwood was happy with his past sufferings were forgotten in the joy of seeing his old and his young charge again together. And how his heart warmed beneath their grateful looks, as Rose turned to him and told him all she had shown her, in their solitary journey through the desert.

But now they were on one of those hills in the rear of their camp. Every thing was apparently as they had left it. A thin, blue column of smoke, rising upward from the village, gave token that the Doctor was busy preparing supper. That the only form could be distinguished moving among the figures engaged in that healthful occupation. The soldiers were lying down on the grass, but giving no doubt to the imagination of the results of the Doctor's labors.

"O, wee law!" yelled Fritz, in the red of his face. This brought the Indians to their feet. The Indians were the first to recognize his friends, and sent back the answering shout with the most exultant faces. Then the Captain, John, Paul, and Dutch broke into a career of wild exultation, were one apparently converging towards the same spot, and were met with this shout, "Vee law!" and the whole party to be led in a single line up in a single line; and after a few direc-

tions, gave them the word to fire, which was done in a manner entirely satisfactory, for each went it on his own hook; the Doctor, who was at the head of the line, commencing the procession, which was taken up in regular succession by the ranks of the others, until it ended with a tremendous discharge from the old weapon of Paupard. This exhibition was followed by another attempt at an Indian yell, which was taken up and answered in a more lusty manner by Simon Fitz.

"Hush!" exclaimed Norwood; "don't you see we are going to have visitors?" at the same time pointing to five or six Indians who appeared on the other side of the river; having apparently descended the bluff without being observed by the Captain's party below, who were too busy with their military display to notice any thing except themselves and their returning fire.

"There's no mountain boys," said Seb, after taking a short look at them. "They're going to cross the river, and I suspect it's their intention to camp with us to-night. They're welcome, I say, if they behave themselves."

"Come on," said Norwood, "let us join our friends at camp. I'll wager a good deal that the Doctor has something fine for supper, which I long to taste, as I have not yet recovered from the effects of my long fast. Come, Ross, Fitz, you and I will go ahead; we'll let them know how to appreciate us," he shouted, as the two parties, with their rifles, sprang down the hillside, toward the camp.

Norwood and Ross had scarcely alighted from their peering horses, when the party they had been seen across the river approached. Following their march parallel to the shore at a moderate pace, until the distance of one of their company was the rear, the Indians, upon reaching the fire, where the horses and all the others were fully engaged, welcomed the arrival of Norwood and his young companion. They came with bare-headed smoking pipes, dressed in the usual garb of mountaineers, buckskin leggings and moccasins, and partly peacefully tinged, and showing a suspicion of the covering of grease and dirt. They were all armed with long, heavy rifles, and some bearing knives, secured by the blades of their buckskin leggings, which were thrust into the belt under the left arm by the buckskin belt. Their faces were apparently as dirty as their garments, but their complexion being tanned with grease, sun and smoke, which, however, was not so heavy, which may have also belonged to their appearance. Norwood's attention was directed toward them, the party of his companions in Ross, who, after waiting a moment, returned to their appearance, and immediately commenced a conversation with the Indians, who, in a friendly manner, asked by that time several questions in relation to the party who had just arrived.

Coming to within a few feet of the fire, they all squatted

themselves on the ground, excepting one, who appeared to be their leader. This one came forward to where Norwood was standing, and touching his deer-skin cap by way of salute, commenced :

"I guess you're the captain, are you? Well, we want to keep company to-night. Hello! why, what are you doing with our Sis?" he exclaimed, with evident astonishment, as, for the first time, he caught sight of Rose's face, who endeavored, apparently in great fear, to shelter herself behind Norwood.

"Well, who'd 'a' thought it!" he continued, "to see our Rose so far away from home?—and with a stranger, at that! Come," he continued, approaching Rose, who now clung to Norwood with the wildest energy. "Come, child, and give your brother a kiss; don't you know Jake? Come, none of your foolery," he continued, as he reached forward to grasp her.

But his advance was suddenly brought to a full stop by a ringing blow from Norwood's fist, that came like a compact against his right temple, and sent him spinning like a whirlingig, until he found himself sprawling on the ground at a greater distance than he expected.

Giving a yell of rage, he sprung to his feet, and drawing his hunting-knife, leaped toward his opponent, with every expression of the heart glaring from his small, black eyes.

Norwood saw him coming, but Rose clung so about him that he had no chance of drawing his pistol; and it was well for him that he had some one near to assist him. Ziah had seen the whole fracas; and now, when Norwood was in such a predicament, he proved himself a peacemaker indeed. Doubting his iron-like fist, he sprung forward with the most surprising activity, and as the mountaineer was about plunging his knife into Norwood's unprotected breast, gave him a blow on the cheek, with such stunning effect, that he fell to the earth as if struck by a thunderbolt.

At the sight of this sudden mishap to their companion, the others sprung to their feet; and one large, grizzled fellow whose face was scarred in many a fight, striking in advance of the rest, planted himself before his prostrate friend, and, bearing two brawny arms, thus commenced :

"Strangers, if you want to fight rough and tumble, or any other ways, jist say the word, and we'll at you like a house on fire. Fair play's fair play all the world over— and I would jist like to see that long grand old give me one of his thers, two of 'em's not fair, I say: but hyer's one that kin take his own part, and hyer any time—ride or no ride—ke him or no him!—Jist say the word, and hyer's at you!"

Norwood began to think that a general fight was inevitable; for the others, having assisted their overthrown companion to his feet, were now crowding round where his little party stood,

and with fierce and angry looks awaited but the signal to commence. His own companions were not in the least daunted by the odds against them. The Doctor pulled off his coat, and rolling up his sleeves, displayed an arm that few could gaze on unmutilated; he felt brave enough, and was certainly big enough, for any three of his opponents. 'Zack' was as calm and as self-possessioned as ever; the only thing that appeared excited about him were his fingers, which were twitching violently, as if they had a mind to grab something, while the Captain, though the smallest in the crowd, felt indignant enough to annihilate a whole army of such "greasy vagabonds," as he, in his wrath, petulantly termed them. Suddenly their opponents were riven as if by some invisible power, and Fritz came bounding into the circle with the velocity of a cannon-ball.

"Back—back!" he cried, at the same time waving them off with his rifle. "Is this the way you treat my friends? Ay! you're here, are you?" he exclaimed, as his eye lit on the huge form of the one who had last spoken. Stepping up to the mountaineer, whose whole form appeared to quail beneath his flashing eye, he exclaimed:

"Steve Rayney, I have long wanted to meet you—I have got you now, and by the Lord who made us, you or I must go under! you're a coward, or you wouldn't have dared me so long. I've been hunting you for three years—ever since you ran a red—yes, murdered," he shouted, while his whole form seemed terribly convulsed—"my young, innocent brother; that was the worst of all your damning deeds. You knew that I would hunt you up; and like a coward that you are, you avoided me; but innocent blood was on your soul, and you trembled when you looked at me, Fritz Collins, who never lies—who never murders—who will never forgive you, you murdering hell-dog!"

The other, who at first showed a little fear, was at last aroused by the denunciations of Fritz; and seeing that there was no retreat, made up by blustering what he wanted in courage. But Fritz stopped him in the midst of his harangue, and pointing to his rifle, said:

"Let this do our talking—it tells no lies; you must fight me, Steve Rayney, before you leave this spot. I will fight you fairly: and if I should get hurt, I would blow your brains out with your own gun, but Fritz Collins never took advantage of any man—except to Heaven I could say the same of you! There's no more to talking," he cried, and then saw the other about to speak, "you must fight, and that too this minute, and upon this spot."

The friends and companions of Rayney now gathered round their commander, offering their services in the approaching conflict; but one only ventured to interpose between the enemies, but oh! how anxious that the fight should go on without any delay. Rayney now appeared to have regained his confidence.

and as he shouted to Fritz to come on, his eager form seemed bursting with the passion whose workings could be seen upon his face.

Norwood wished very much to interfere, but he saw that all hopes of working upon Fritz's feelings would be useless; and when, when he considered that it was to avenge a friend's death, he did not wonder at the display of passion and resolution from his companion. Learning that the direction of the river now came up, he accompanied Fritz a short distance to a new camp, where the others had already arrived, and which was to be the spot for the encounter.

One of the mounted Indians now gave the conditions of the battle, which were of a simple nature indeed. Each combatant was to be armed with a bow and hunting-knife; they were to be placed one hundred and fifty yards apart, and at the word were to advance toward each other, firing the long rifle; if either combatant was killed, the combat was to be finished with the knife. These directions were given with a terrible determination, and then Norwood's heart with a foreboding that almost made him faint, and his friend is already dead. This was a contest of the most desperate kind, no satisfaction to be repaired or given to either combatant should he scratch his knees upon the sand. Yet Norwood did not shrink from the conditions or difficulty of Fritz; but it was the amount of the debt that struck him with such a chill; a debt which he must pay—and in this it differed very much from ordinary debts, which generally only demanded a harmless payment of property and cash, to satisfy the wounded honor of the creditor.

Fritz appeared to have lost all his former excitement. He was now calm, cool, and determined—fully aware of the nature of the combat, and of what was required of him, rather than of himself. His opponent was also apparently self-possessed. His form and manner showed him to be possessed of twice as much courage as his lighter adversary; but this was of no advantage when the rifle was to be the weapon; and depended upon his preparation, and a superior skill in its use.

The ground was now measured off, but before they took their respective positions, their rifles were examined by the two and renewed fire; knives were placed in their scabbards, and the two men stood face to face, awaiting the signal. The symptoms of this wild contest seemed all the more terrible when a loud whoop from one of the mounted Indians gave notice that the battle had commenced. The two opponents moved forward with slow and cautious steps—each with a determined purpose, ready to spring upon the other at the first opportunity. They moved slowly approaching each other, until they had advanced within a hundred yards of each other. Fritz, with a steady and taking deliberate aim at the breast of his antagonist, fired. At the moment the trigger was touched, the bullet flew straight to one side, and the bullet rattled up the side of the tree.

shirt, and passed between his body and left arm. The movement and the crack of the rifle was so instantaneous, that Norwood thought his mind was done for, imagining his body to have thus started as it felt the wound. Fritz's dexterity had saved his life, and he still advanced as slowly and as cautiously as ever. The other, seeing his first fire thrown away, paused, and began reloading with as much dispatch as possible. Fritz took full consciousness of having him completely in his power, and he was so confident was in no hurry to take advantage of it. He continued approaching till within seventy or eighty yards, and when the other was about done reloading, when he stopped—his arm raised above the barrel for a moment—and the bullet from his rifle went on, going through the brain of his opponent. Fritz looked after his brother; it was a cruel deed that prompted him to do that—and terribly was it avenged.

Leaving the rest of the work to bury the body of their companion, Marmont and his men returned silently to their camp, and it was a long time before their usual flow of spirits could return; for Decca, whether he strikes an enemy or friend, is still the same terrible being, and leaves a shadow wherever his foot has touched.

"That was well done, Fritz," said old Sam, when they came to where he was sitting; "you've rid the earth of one villain, but there's still a good many like him, who ought to be served the same way. I had no fears of you, Fritz; I knewed you'd do it—just in a common way, and in any's the time I prophesied you'd come to something more. It so has been crying all the time; she was sure'd something might happen you, and I was sure'd my endeavors would take her eyes in my hands. Look up," he cried, "at the same time raising her hand to his brow, where she had torn off her eyes; "look up, now—here's Fritz, sure and sound, as I told you it would be."

It opened her eyes, which were still swimming in tears, but she scarcely knew the reason, when she saw the person of the gentleman from whom she had been rescued. Norwood had so

[illegible]

"John," exclaimed he, "so, in an excited voice, at the same time pointing to his face, "you're a scoundrel!—you're no son of mine; it can't be, or you wouldn't be the villain you are,

without some redeeming traits to your character. Ain't you ashamed to appear before my face, after what you done when you were last at home? I told you then never to return, or I'd forget your name was Jake Cone, and send a bullet through you as I would through a painter. What did you come here for, I'd like to know? To rob or to murder some of the traders, I 'spect, and then blame it on the Indians."

"Why, dad," replied the hopeful son, as soon as old Sib paused, apparently for want of breath, "you're too hard now; indeed you are. What'll these 'ere strangers think of me after the fine recommendation you have given me? I didn't come here for nothin' bad, I imagine—just out on a scout from Bear's Fort, and nothin' more, I assure you; so you see you're on the wrong track this time!"

"Maybe so," replied Sib; "but though I say it myself, I tell you, Jake, I don't believe you—you're too big a liar to believe the truth, even if it's spoke by yourself. Go and join your companions over there—you're not fit for decent company until you change your manners. Go along, I tell you; this child," pointing to Rose, who sat crouching at his feet, "is afraid of you, and so is every thing good afraid of you. Maybe you're after her this time; but I tell you, Jake, if you attempt to take this child away, I'll shoot you as I would a dog. I've said enough—go along, now, or I'll forget that I'm your father."

There was something in the language and appearance of the old man that completely silenced the young fellow; and he turned upon his heel with an abashed, yet vindictive look.

"Rose," said the old man, sitting down beside her and holding her affectionately in his arms, "don't be afraid; no harm shall happen you as long as I'm alive; and when I go under you'll have a warm friend in Fritz. Jake is a bad man, but he'll never try again to carry you off from your old father; so don't cry; we'll soon be at our old home in the mountains, and then we'll be so happy!"

Leaving the old man and his child together, Norwood took Fritz aside, and inquired about this young fellow, who called himself Sib's only son, and why he wished to abduct Rose away from his father.

"He's as great a villain," began Fritz, "as Sib says he is. It had not been for my love for Sib's daughter and I should have had our senses settled long ago. He's a handsome fellow, a good Mexican woman that Sib picked up somewhere in the mountains. He's been a liver and fortune hunter. Norwood is the only one for him to do, which is all owing principally to the fact that he got under Steve Rayner, who's been the most successful trader I have ever heard of, and I don't think he never found him. He is a great gambler; and on one of his excursions to Santa Fe, losing all his money, he croaked into old Sib's store, and took away with him all the loose change he could lay his hands on,

which, however, was not much—only ten or twelve dollars I believe. He gambled this away the same night; he was playing monte, and the dealer was an old hag named Toulis, who followed various occupations, of which gambling was by far the most respectable. After his money was all gone, he said he had a fairy of a sister at home, and he would stake her against five dollars, which S. nora Toulis agreed to, more to humiliate him than any thing else. This wager was also lost. A year or two passed away, when old Toulis, hearing by some means or other of the wonderful beauty and innocence of Rose, determined to become possessed of her, in order to train her up for sale, as she had many another poor girl. By threats and by promises, she persuaded Jake to attempt to carry her off, which he tried a couple of times, but was always frustrated by S. nora. Old Toulis, who is a real hell hound, when she has once started any thing, encouraged him to further attempts. The last time, which was only this last spring, he nearly succeeded, having had Steve Rayney and a couple of others to assist him. S. nora was in the mountains, hunting, when they came to his little cabin. They were just taking her away, in spite of all her prayers and struggles, when he fortunately returned and saved her; but not till he had drawn a bead on Jake's heart. So, you see, that's the reason Rose was so shamed at his appearance; and a good reason it is, too. Old S. nora himself has almost got to dislike him, notwithstanding he is his father. But what they can be after, away out here, is more than I can tell, though it is for nothing good, I assure you. For, let me tell you, them fellows he's with are the worst set of devils in the mountains—ready and willing for any thing, from robbing a cattle yard to murdering a friend for his money. There's no dependence to be put in them—I know them every one; but the biggest scoundrel among them is Jake Cone!"

CHAPTER VII.

THE LEGEND OF THE BOILING SPRING.

THE first of October—the most beautiful of all the months—came and passed, and still the mountains. The snow was not yet fallen. A narrow snow-drift, here and there, covered the mountain-side, deep down, everywhere, with tall and thin evergreen trees, whose branches were heavily laden with the dark, frosty snow. The mountains were now more lonely and more dreary than ever before. The mountain was now all a white, and the only sound of life was the low, hoarse, and hoarse cry of the mountain. It was a quiet, lonely place. The first of October seemed never to have been broken by the sound of living voices, or stirred by the warbling hoarse of the lonely trapper.

soul, confessed, when seeing her whole form swelling with some innate feeling, that he had never dreamed of any creature so beautiful, and so full of the warm sympathies of nature.

"Come, Rose," he said, after having in a manner smoothed her feelings, "you have promised to tell me some of the beautiful stories connected with this spring. It is a fitting time for a wild legend, such as I know you intend telling me."

"Oh, yes!" she replied, her face brightening as she spoke; "I have a great many to tell you, which I had from an old Shoshone woman, who used to visit us very often, but is now dead. I have many beautiful ones, but these I'd keep for some other time. Now I will tell you one that I often think about, when I come here to look into this water, dreaming as if it were alive. It is short, and tells us how this beautiful spring originated."

"Long ago, before the face of a white man was seen, or known to exist, a great race of Indians, of whom the Shoshones are all that now remain, inhabited this lovely region. Then these valleys were filled with all kinds of game; even the hunters had nothing to do but to go a little distance from their campment, when they would find buffaloes, deer, bears, elk, and mountain sheep, all of which could be obtained with but little trouble; for that was in the time when the Great Spirit loved his red children, and gave them all they could desire, because they were good, and sacrificed a white dog every full moon. Thus they lived, from year to year, happy and at peace with all their neighbors.

"But this could not always last. A dark cloud came across their sun, and the face of their great Manitou was turned away. He became angry with them, and the bears, and deer, and other animals, were turned away from the arrows of the young hunters, and they all returned silent and sad to their empty lodges. Sacrifices were offered to appease the evil spirit, but nothing would turn away the Manitou's anger from his children.

"Wah-tah-gah was the chief, and he rested for six days, until the will of the Great Spirit might speak in his dreams, so that he could find a way to restore happiness to his people. On the sixth night, he dreamed a white woman came to his lodge, and brought a bow and quiver of arrows to his mother, and laying them at his feet, motioned for him to follow. Now, Wah-tah-gah had an only daughter, as beautiful as an angel, and he loved her as she deserved to be loved. He dreamed that in the forest doorkin, as soft and as delicate as the grass that grows under the summer wind; and he thought he would make a priceless necklace of eagle claws; and his hands were furnished with yellow gold, and from her ears depended beautiful pendants of white shell, interlaced with red and yellow quills. The white tribe loved her, and called her the White Dove, because her dress of doorkin was as white as the mountain snow. The

young braves, when going to the chase, always passed by the old chief's lodge, that the glances of the White Pawn might light their arrows with lightning, and make them fatal to the bear and the deer; and when they returned from the mountains, laden with spoil, the choicest portions were left at the lodge of White Pawn, for the sake of his beloved daughter.

One day, as he lay on his bed of skins, when the morning sun shone brightly over his dream, "The Great Spirit has spoken to me," he said, "and he has said that a party would be in state in all our villages." While he was yet thinking, his daughter came in, and in her hands were the frog-skinned bow, wrapped with deer-skin, and the barbed arrows of her father.

"Father, the Great Spirit has spoken to me," she said, "as she told me, and I thought of you; but you must tell no one, or his soul will be turned away from his children. You must tell me what you shall see or hear in the place I was told to send you; for the voice whispered in my ear that the day you returned you must be a great and happy day, that day your joy would be turned to sorrow, and evil would forever trouble your people. Come, tell me now; and the Great Spirit will again make our people glad!"

She then picked up her bow and arrows, and followed after him. It was to the very north, in a deep glen, far within the mountains, that she led him. The stars of night had not yet passed beyond their deep spot, when, on a sign from her, they both stopped. White Pawn knew the place; it was the burial-ground of the chiefs of a tribe that existed before his fathers saw the sun. They were standing at the foot of the mountain on which their resting-place lay; but what was the meaning of this? To see a light opening in the side of the mountain? White Pawn led him to enter, and then turned on her homeward path.

"The heart of the chief was brave, but it melted when he entered the cold house of the buried dead. He had not gone far when he saw a brilliant light, as if coming from the mountain side. The strength of his heart. On a sudden, he found himself looking out upon a beautiful land, where some things were with golden trees, and streams sparkling with many flowers, but that which attracted his eyes were the great houses of the chiefs, standing on a wide, extensive plain, and the fields of corn, and grapes, and all other kinds of grain. The people were all happy and content. White Pawn led him to the very ground of the spirit-land, and his soul was turned to the Great Spirit, who had prepared the happiness prepared for the good."

As the chief returned, he found the people all happy and content, and that day was the day of the great feast. One of the chiefs, who was the greatest of the tribe, was the

ped before him, and with eyes that spoke like tigers, told him to come and mount. The chief sprung upon his back, and off he darted as fleet as the wind, bearing him out upon the plain, and right in the thickest of the herd of buffaloes. Wahnahaga's arrows were as quick and fatal as the lightning; and when all were gone, he found a whole heap of the fattest ones lying dead upon the grass.

"His beautiful steed then galloped away, and left him right at the entrance of the pass or oryx-hole whereby he had entered. The chief, with many a sad, lingering look, turned his back upon the beautiful land, and forced his way through darkness to his own colder world. When he again emerged from the side of the tumulus, and stood in the little snow-draw, he there found all the game he had slain already, having been carried out before him by some invisible hands.

"Wahnahaga returned, wondering and thankful, to his lodge. His people had not seen him at night; but, as soon as they got sight of his happy face, they knew he had good news for his starving children. They all came crowding round him when he told them to take all their horses and load them with the good meat that the Great Spirit had given them; then they shouted and danced for joy. There was no more hunger any more, for every one was provided with plenty, and they all thanked the Great Spirit, that he had given them so good and brave a chief.

"When this supply was done, Wahnahaga and his daughter went again to the hill of the spirit-bird. The old chief entered, and found his white horse waiting. Again were his deadly arrows sent among the fleeing game. His young men were waiting for his return, and as soon as they saw his goodly store of meat, they hurried to the lonely place, and returned laden with the fattest meat. While Wahnahaga enjoyed the security of silence as to how and where his supplies were obtained, every thing prospered. But evil times were busy at work among his braves, and they turned their eyes toward the sky.

"*'Snow is the place where you find no more buffaloes; and dead, that we may also hunt. Our chief has longed with you and Manitou; he wishes to destroy us; his deeds must be evil, or why should he shun the light?'*

"Thus, at last, worked so hard, even Wahnahaga, that, in a moment of forgetfulness, he uttered what White Fawn had so often told him to conceal.

"The next time the chief and his daughter went to the spirit-world a body of his braves lay in wait on the mountain side to watch, and if need be, to cover him the next morning. The White Fawn wept aloud at her father's secret and shameful deed. She knew the great evil he had done, and she grieved up and down all that long day and night. When they came to the hill where they found the spirit-bird, she said to her father,

Fawn was impelled onward by some invisible power until her form was lost in the darkness of that lonely path, when the sides of the mound came suddenly together, enclosing her forever from the sight of her now weeping father. With snows and lamentations the braves bore the swooning body of their chief back to his village. The young men and maidens mourned her for many a day. Wah-na-lahna became as a shadow—he would eat nothing, and at last he died, calling on his child.

“Several moons after, a fountain of water was discovered on the top of the mound that concealed the body of the White Fawn. And the Indians say, that in the full moon her form can be seen sitting on the water, which sparkles beneath her like silver stars. Some say that she is still alive, and that the tears she sheds in her dark prison, spring up and form this beautiful fountain, which ever has a sad and melancholy sound, like a complaining soul. And this is the legend of the boiling spring, or white fountain.”

CHAPTER VIII.

A HUNT IN THE MOUNTAINS.

WHEN Norwood and his companions left the boiling spring on their way homeward, the morning sun had ascended some distance on his career, and was now looking over the mountains just into that lonely glen, dispersing the shadows, and scattering his beams like long, golden arrows through the dark pines and cedars. Rose was now all life; with her steady, soft hand clasped in Norwood's, she walked along side, telling him of a thousand things—of her hopes—her joys—and how she clambered up the pine, wild mountain after her wandering goats—and of the beautiful flowers she gathered in the valleys—and of the birds that sang in the springtime and built their nests in the mountain ash beside her little hut—and then her voice changed to a lower tone as she spoke of the voices heard at night and the fire—and the unearthly sounds among the rocks when the storm cloud enveloped them from sight. Her whole being was but the reflex of nature in all her beautiful varieties of sights and sounds; and Norwood—too happy in having such an instructor—watched along as if his soul had but now caught a glimpse of the deep joys of life. Certain it was that nature had never before worn such looks, so full of mystery. The tall pines and the towering cedars seemed whispering secret words; and the rushing stream a living creature, clapping its hands and singing on its way. Her words seemed to have opened to him a joy world before; and unconsciously his eyes looked with theirs into the deep veil of nature, and the secret of things that to the diviner's eye alone have a meaning and a language.

Their path now led them through a deep, wild gorge: on both sides was a wall of solid rock rising perpendicularly to a great height, and crowned with a few strange, blasted cedars whose long, white branches stretched over the chasm, and pene- trated on the clear, blue sky, seemed like the stony arms of anchorites threatening a wicked world. Through this chasm flowed a wild torrent—at one moment dashing over snow- shelving fall and breaking into frothy foam against the break- ing rocks; again, curling round and round behind the shelter of the projecting bank, forming deep and quiet pools; and then, like a quick spirit tired of its ease, starting into the wild pursuit, and going with many a leap and bound on its rough and destined course.

This wild gorge soon opened into a basin of considerable ex- tent, surrounded on every side by black, grim mountains, whose faces alone were decorated with the pine and cedar. In the center of this basin was a wide, extended meadow, through which the torrent above mentioned flowed as calmly and as so- berly as if it had not before been dashing and bounding down its rocky channel, delighting in noise and confusion. The meadow was covered with large, wild grass now growing to the golden tinge of autumn. Scattered over it was a carpet of cedar-tineed with the ash, whose yellow leaves now forming a soft and contrast with the deep green of its neighboring trees. In the midst of this meadow, and enclosed in a small grove of ash and cedar, was the residence of Sam.

It was a rude and half-savannah hut, composed of two parts sunk in the ground, that were joined to each other by a few rotten poles—these supported a number of long pieces of bark standing upright and forming a low, white, domed roof of the cotton; this layer of bark was plastered on the outside with a thick coat of clay, which formed a warm but not very durable wall to this rude abode. The roof was made of raw buffalo-hides stretched over a thick layer of rough and heavily poles. And for a door were suspended a couple of antlers, form- ing a flap to a narrow opening in the side of the cotton forming the stream. The interior was divided off by a low partition of the skins running across the far corner of the hut. This part of the house belonged entirely to Rose, who was the owner of the heavy robes of the white and gray bear, and a few articles of the shining and thick furs of dried beaver from the waters flowing in the wall. The outer apartment was devoted almost to the exclusive use of a trapper's wife. There, upon benches, were a couple of beaver-houses, several boxes and barrels of various kinds, and many deep and shallow baskets of various shapes—long all around the bark wall, with an entire assortment of re- sults. A large pile of buffalo and other skins were lying in one corner; in another were stored several boxes of dried venison, and long, thin slices of smoked beaver. In another

"Come, Doctor," replied the Captain, "I don't want to commence quarreling with you at the present time; but, as I say, I will vouch for the truth of every word I say in my book! and that is more than you can say for every word that comes out of your mouth!"

"I declare you're very modest, very!" replied the Doctor, in some heat. "You say you don't want to quarrel, and yet you begin by insinuations—yes, sir! insinuations against my character for veracity. However, you're one of the Dutch folks, and that accounts for the many foolish notions you entertain!"

"Yes, sir!" he continued, seeing that his remarks had wounded the Captain, "you may thank yourself for every thing you say in the way of hard words! If you talk like a gentleman, you will be treated as a gentleman!"

"Come! come!" said Sib, now seeing that both disputants were becoming warm, "it's a shame that you and me, who are agreed, I would like to know what's to become of us, if you wise folks can't keep your tempers and talk sensibly together?"

"I tell you," said the Captain, springing to his feet, "I won't suffer that lubberly thing, that old's head, to be thrust upon me. I wasn't made to be trooped upon by any man Yank!"

"No insinuations ag'in' the Yanks!" cried a Yankee, as he turned his church-going face toward the irritated Captain. "Talk as you like about the Doctor as a man, but say nothing ag'in' the Yanks, if you have any respect for my feelings!"

"Now, fellows!" exclaimed Sib, "I want you all to know what I'm here for; and I won't leave my good name as long as I'm about. You're all my guests, and as long as you stay here, you shall all be treated alike. But mind, no fighting, no quarreling, or I'll interfere; and I might be compelled to take some o' your feelin's!"

This address of old Sib's had a magical effect upon both parties for the present. Therequaintance, however, was soon made up; for the Doctor, though a little sensitive, was at least one of the best natured fellows living, and was always the first to extend the hand of friendship to the common Captain; who, however, never his dignity was so much wounded as to be obliged to withstand the Doctor's presence. The two disputants, when seated by a fire of old Dutch pipes, were soon reconciled, and the Doctor, who was a very good fellow, was soon making up for the Captain's loss of temper, and the two were soon talking of the best way to keep the peace, and the Doctor, who was a very good fellow, was soon making up for the Captain's loss of temper, and the two were soon talking of the best way to keep the peace, and the Doctor, who was a very good fellow, was soon making up for the Captain's loss of temper, and the two were soon talking of the best way to keep the peace.

Good Hunter being again restored between the two parties, and Norwood now coming up their whole plans for spending the remainder of the day in the mountains were laid before him; but our hero, as the Doctor had imagined, said he would not remain at the cabin, to keep Rose company, and that Pasqual, Dutch and himself would have a roasting fire burning, and supper prepared by the time of their return. Besides, he said it might be dangerous for them all to go away and leave their animals in the meadow, under the weak guardianship of Dutch and Pasqual, for some roving band of Navajoes might come along and drive them off.

"No fear of that," said Sib; "I have lived here five years, and none of the Navajoes ever disturbed me; for though many of them have visited this spot, they were always very friendly and never offered me any injury. I have no fear of them; and I have never known the Arapahoes to come in this way, till that time they carried off my little Rose off the mountain. Oh, no, there is no fear of Indians; don't let that keep you at home; and as to Rose, why, this is often still abroad for weeks at a time, when I went to Santa Fe, and never felt lonely. But, however, if you'd rather stay at home, we've nothing more to say; only you, you know, must tell him."

Norwood did not ask for more argument; his whole journey hitherto had been one of a winning success, and he wished to go for a little travelling; besides, he wanted, in company with Rose, to visit a quiet little valley, a short distance off, and one kind of deer resorted to him, and which, in his opinion, was the very Paradise of places. He therefore excused himself from the proposed expedition, and the next departed without delay, sending back many a wild halloo, as long as they were within sight of the hill.

Our party of hunters, guided by old Sib, were in great spirits. The day was cool and pleasant, and the Doctor declared he could travel as far, and climb over as many rocks, as the best of them, though they had not half the load to carry. His age and weakness were the only two things that rendered him incapable of any exertion, as he said himself. But now he had his body full of the choicest viands old Sib's horse could find, and then the same horse, near the medicine, was not pulling forth such quantity of force as he did when on the prairie his rider being contented with the ordinary and common portion of natural food, and his ride on his shoulder, with as much ease and buoyancy as a flying hawk.

After travelling for half an hour, they found themselves at the base of a rugged and steep mountain, whose base was thick with numerous masses of dark rocks, interspersed with banks of sandy soil and cedar. So that the way up through this wild and rugged scene was barren. The ascent was very disagreeable, and they saw large piles of rounded rocks, and then the rough

the thick and low branches of a cedar grove, where the eye could not see an arm's length ahead; at one time descending into some deep gully, with which the whole face of the mountain seemed to coincide; at another, climbing up to a point of view on the other side of some barren hill, where there was a growth of scrub-pines and cedars. Thus it continued, until even the Doctor's good nature began to give out in repeated ejaculations, about the best of traveling for the question of shooting something.

At last, however, they emerged from this "confal wilderness," as Zerk termed it, and found themselves on a level barren or plateau running round the whole side of the mountain. Turning to the right, they went along quietly and unobtrusively, for Sio said they were now among the pastures of the Bar Indians, and might expect to see a flock of them at every step.

After passing along the face of the mountain, the plateau they were on opened out to a considerable extent, and now formed a kind of valley, running between the mountain they had descended and another much higher, whose summit appeared to be but one mass of solid rock, rising to the right of them to the hundred feet above their present elevation. Travelling along this valley for a few minutes, the mountain on their right seemed to be parted in its center, through which ran a deep, dark gorge, on a level with and broader at the mouth than the spot on which they were. Flanking this narrow passage, which was almost choked up with fallen masses of rock, and partly covered by and themselves in the midst of a number of rocks, lying in all directions, and cutting the mountain into a number of pointed peaks. Some of these peaks were of considerable height, and many of them filled with a thick growth of dwarfed cedars.

As yet, no game had been observed. Sio had been told that for the purpose of making an appearance to the Indians, it was finally agreed that the party should be divided—Sio and the Doctor taking down one of the ditches, where the party followed another running in the same direction; both parties to meet at a certain point designated. The Captain, who was under the guidance of Fritz, soon began to get tired, and as they would all be compelled to retrace their steps when they reached home, he concluded he would stop and rest awhile, and then he would return to their place of abode, to assist the recovery of his companions. Taking Fritz and Zerk of his own party, he soon turned upon a detached place of rock, where he remained for a while.

The place in which he was was surrounded by a dense growth of pine and cedar, in the dark woods of which the deer tracks were soon lost sight of. The Captain remained in the same position for a long time after they left. His rifle barrel pointed the rock on which he sat; his thoughts were far away—from his distant friends and family, beyond the extensive snow-

He had remained thus a long time, when he became aware that something was moving through the bushes, as if coming toward him. He at first scarcely paid any attention to the noise, as it was in the direction his companions had taken, and he thought it might be caused by one of them on his homeward return. But soon, all his attention was absorbed by the increasing noise, which now seemed as if some large animal were struggling through the low branches of the wood—breaking and crushing them at every step. The Captain seized his rifle, and waited anxiously for the appearance of the animal; and he had not long to wait; for there, not six paces distant, a huge grizzly bear charged from the thicket, and appeared coming directly toward the rock on which the Captain was still sitting. The Captain was indeed startled to find himself in such dangerous proximity to an animal of whose ferocity he had heard so many wonderful stories; however, there was no time to be lost in considering what to do, for the bear was fast approaching him, though as yet he had not observed the obstruction in his path, but came along with his snout to the ground, as if looking for berries among the fallen leaves. Bringing his rifle to his shoulder, the Captain took a sure aim, and fired full on the front of the huge animal; but the ball only penetrated the skin, and fell flattened from the iron skull of the bear. Scarcely stopping to see the effect of his fire, the Captain started off at a run, in the hope of hiding himself among the bushes and rocks, until such time as he thought his enemy would either lay down and die, or move off in some other direction. But Bruin was not to be eluded so easily. Shaking his head a few times, as he felt the solid concussion from the bullet, he turned after the Captain, whose retreating little body was just vanishing among the cedars.

The Captain, now fearing the enemy turning through the low bushes to his rear, reduced his speed, turning round while he made his way through the woods, in the hope of putting Mr. Bruin off the track. But though he moved among rocks and bushes, he could still hear the panting of his animal follower behind, and occasionally caught a glimpse of his gray hide among the dark green of the low cedar branches. It was a painful game of hide-and-seek; and when the Captain would have thought himself somewhat hidden from the eyes of his enemy, or in some dark clump of bushes, he would suddenly be startled by seeing the grizzly of his pursuer in close proximity with his own. The Captain became impatient of being thus harassed, and his perseverance was very much exhausted with his movements, and the effort he would, he thought, not find upon the subject, but still he could not help his natural curiosity. That night, the hunters were not able to find the place where the animal had been, and the hunters were obliged to give up the pursuit. The next day, the hunters were obliged to give up the pursuit, and the hunters were obliged to give up the pursuit. The next day, the hunters were obliged to give up the pursuit, and the hunters were obliged to give up the pursuit.

heavy masses, he leaped to climb up into some inaccessible place, where the bear would not be able to follow. This exertion gave renewed energy to his tired limbs, and for a while he succeeded in gaining a decided advantage over his pursuer. He knew that the Englishman was in full sight, but he was climbing apparently without much exertion, as if certain of his prey.

But there is a barrier to all human exertion; and our friend, the Captain, soon found one to his further progress, in the shape of a high rock, whose smooth side it was in vain to attempt scaling. On either hand, the rocks stood like giant fingers, forming a complete trap, in which the Captain was caught, for all retreat was now cut off, by the bear appearing only a few yards distant, and blocking up the narrow path by which he had entered.

"Cease the brute!" yelled the Captain, as he turned with a terrified look to face his pursuer. "Damn him! he's a regular man-eater, I say! I wonder if some of my companions were about."

So saying, the Captain uttered a couple of the most startling yells, in order to give notice to his friends, if any were near. He called, that he was in a mighty bad predicament. The Englishman was fast approaching—his whole front crimsoned with the blood from the wound made by the bullet from the Captain's rifle. The Eskimoes now felt his fate as their own. He had nothing but a knife wherewith to defend himself—but which, even in more powerful and coarser hands, would be next to nothing against such a ferocious adversary.

The Captain had made up his mind to die rather; but as his eye took in the nature, size and strength of the animal, and saw his scanty life all centered with the knife, he changed his mind, and vanished. Leaving his knife deep he turned, and then he went the rocky barrier, with the vain hope of attempting to climb it; but that would have been a tedious attempt. The bear was now almost upon him. Gliding a yard or two, he stopped, he turned round to gaze at the pursuer, he made a desperate charge; but this action proved his advantage, for as he did, his eye happened to catch the appearance of a large, deep, and narrow crevice or tunnel, under the rock right before him. He sprang to it with easy, sure steps, he managed to scramble just as the bear reached his hiding-place.

This recess, so providently discovered, occupied but a short distance into the rock; it gave him a few feet more, but it was almost at full length; but it was so dark that he was obliged to squeeze his way in, and he did so. The bear, however, pursued. He was too stupid to understand that the man was gone, and he continued to follow him, until he was so close that he could see the man's face, and he began growling and howling under the projecting rock. The Cap-

tain scarcely dared to breathe; he had hopes of escaping the notice of his vicious enemy, but in this he was soon deceived; for Brain scented him out with the same facility a dog would a game animal; and now thrust his long, bloody nose under the furs, and drew a sniff or two to satisfy himself, with now his snout, and then very leisurely introduced one of his fore-paws, to push his prey out of his killing place. The Captain, upon seeing this, drew paw so thick and heavily thrust toward him, jumping to the end of the room with a convulsive energy. The fore-paws of the bear came within an inch of his body,—near enough to make a cold shiver pass through every fibre of his person. The Captain leaped to his feet when that terrible creature was withdrawn. But Brain was not yet satisfied. Throwing as much of his head as he could get into the narrow opening, he took what talent he could, knowing squat at the remaining Englishman. Appearing satisfied with his observations, his long paw was again introduced; but this time his claws gripped the tail of the Captain's leather shirt, and almost instantaneously the headless Englishman found himself sliding along on his wake, full upon the expecting beast. The Captain's fingers slipped along the rock, catching with convulsive energy at every inch until he had gained his further progress to the open air, where he fell with a crash. At last he succeeded in bracing himself with one hand against a projection of the rock above; and then, even the time. The coat was of buckram, and consequently of great strength and durability; and being thus secured round the body by a web, was not to be torn away without a tremendous exertion of strength. The bear, finding this was beyond his power, was the old man's body from pushing, when his head was cold in the coat, and not in the body of his game. Throwing his big muzzle under the rock, he saw how matters stood, he with the pulled him on the Captain within a foot of his own. Giving a sniff or two, apparently of his satisfaction, his head was withdrawn, and he began endeavoring to introduce his other paw, to take a fresh hold; but owing to the projection of the rock, he could not succeed in accomplishing his purpose. The Captain, in the mean time, had managed to succeed to loosen the buckle of his belt with his hands, which were pressed at liberty, and using the string that secured his breeches, drew him forward and back; and thus, when the bear had withdrawn his second paw, with a snarl, immediately proceeding to remove his body forward, at one spring he was completely free from the clutches; and when Brain was another pace, the Englishman came upon him, and then, without any further delay, he again took up his old position.

Now the bear, having been by himself, after vainly endeavoring to find some means to escape, was alone left alone, as though he had been a game animal, and standing still. Brain, however, was not so easily deceived; but

the Captain had squeezed himself into the least circumference possible, and the long claws of the bear, though snapping his body in several places, were unable to gain a sufficient hold to pull him forth. The bear worked away with the most commendable perseverance, first thrusting in one paw; and after securing the Captain's ribs for a few minutes, withdrew it, and introduced the other with like effect. The Captain stood the poking manfully; and though his whole body was squeezed up, as if part and parcel of the rock behind him, still he found lungs enough to curse and groan at a wonderful rate. But observing at last that this seemed to spur on the bear to more strenuous exertions, he was forced to check his venting words. However, would burst out occasionally into a yell of agony, or a more successful poke, when his enemy would succeed in wedging his claws against his now isolated ribs.

Hour after hour passed away, and still the bear, with but an occasional intermission, for the purpose of resting, kept poking and snelling with as great a zest as ever. The Captain was nearly exhausted. He had hoped that when evening approached his persecutor would travel off and leave him; but now, from the increasing gloom without, he felt certain that the sun had set, and still the bear appeared to have no notion of departure.

"Ah!" sighed the Captain, "if I am compelled to stay here all night, I will be a gone goose before morning! Human nature can not live in this position!"

His melancholy thoughts were, however, interrupted by the sharp report of a couple of rifles, followed by the sudden appearance of his enemy. He was rescued. He found himself on side, and soon the long, solemn face of Zich was seen, instead of the bear's, peering into the darkness.

"Hyar he is!" cried Zich to some one without; "I feel as sure as a skunk! Come out, Captain, come out! the bear's done for, sure enough. Hyar, take heed of my gun, I'll put you out!"

The Captain, with this assistance, was soon in the open air, and freed from his rocky prison. Old Seb was also there, but now appeared to be intently engaged skinning the head and paws of the bear, which lay a few feet from the mouth of the "Captain's hole," as Zich termed it.

It was a long time before the Captain was sufficiently recovered to commence his journey homeward. Old Seb, with Zich's assistance, had taken the shaggy hide off the body of the bear, which the Captain determined to preserve as a memento of the first bear shot in that country. When they started homeward it was quite dark, and then the Captain first learned how his hide is laid down and dried. Zich had to conduct him to his hide, as he was returning down the bank, and, accompanying father, found from the marks only known to a trapper's eye,

that he had been pursued by a bear. Calling to Sib, who now
was in sight, the two, after a good deal of difficulty, succeeded
in following up the trail, until they fortunately relieved him.
It was a narrow escape; and for the future, no temptation,
however great, could induce the Captain to hunt grizzly bears
in the Rocky Mountains.

CHAPTER IX.

SHADOWS OF THE FUTURE.

Two weeks passed away and our party were still at old S. F.'s. The time was mostly spent in hunting and the mountains; and S. F.'s father had never before been so well stocked with bear-meat, venison, and other wild game. It was a happy time for all. The Doctor had increased his collection with many strange and valuable plants; and then, too, he had had in a store of dried vegetable meats to eat on his journey to Santa Fe. The only drawback to his happiness was, that his liquor did not stand extensive as well as himself—being now entirely gone; but this he had been a very generous in his disposal; and every evening, when supper was over, and the party would circle round the fireplace, he, to listen to the entertaining stories of old S. F., he would fill a pipe and send it round in the palms of the hands, not only to show S. F.'s greater fluency in speech, but also to support the talk with a hot spirit for his own. However, and though he had plenty of the bear-meat and venison to eat, there was no great loss; and though at night he would miss his mother's flesh, still, he comforted himself by the satisfaction of buying in another supply as soon as he arrived at Santa Fe.

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2. The first and most important consideration is the quality of the work. The quality of the work is the most important factor in determining the value of the work. The quality of the work is the most important factor in determining the value of the work.

the cold, frosty nights, and the rude growling of the wind among the dark-green cedars.

Norwood had passed most of his time in company with Rose, wandering up some of the lonely valleys, or climbing up the rough mountain's side to see the sun rise and set. Rose was never happy but when with him; and as the time drew near in which he was to bid her good-by, she appeared to attach herself to him still more than ever, and would never leave him; but in walking or sitting would remain with her small hand clasped in his, as if by that mute action she would detain him from his intended departure. And Norwood himself had taken so much delight in her company, that he felt it would require a considerable exertion to depart with the probability of never seeing her again. He had spoken to Sib several times about the possibility of hunting up her parents, if yet living, but he could give him no clue whatever to assist him in his search. And when he hinted the advantages that she would have if brought into civilized life, and that he would, by every means in his power, attempt to make her situation happy, it brought so much pain to the old man's heart that he did not venture to press it. Sib had been as a father to the lost one; and though rough and rude to almost every one else, to her he was all gentleness, all affection. His whole life appeared to be devoted to her; and Norwood felt that it would be cruel even to think of taking her away.

But now withstanding all this, he was determined, in his journey down the Rio del Norte, to make all the inquiries possible, in hopes of hearing something of her parents; and if unsuccessful, he would be compelled to return home and leave her there a wild rose in the wilderness, blooming in solitude and fragrance its fragrance on the desert air." It need be said that this last thought was a sad one. She had so won upon his feelings, that, unconsciously, in all his dreams of the future her sweet face was one of those bright hopes that never reveal the present, casting ahead a portion of their rays to designate the path that leads through gloom and darkness to the dread unknown. He had been careful not to mention any of his plans to Rose, for well he knew it would be feeding her mind upon hopes that might never be realized; and if unsuccessful, he would never forgive himself for the pain she would suffer. Rose had been the life and light of the whole company; her joyous smile and happy looks had even won over Zillah; so that, even in her company the usual solemnity of his countenance relaxed, and a pleasant emotion could be distinguished stealing over his brow, like a beam of sunshine over the surface of a gloomy, dark lake. All that happier when in her presence; for her presence, like the sun, brought everything up before her, and threw a portion of its own joy upon the darker spots of those around.

Yet now she felt lonely. From many little particulars,

she knew that Norwood and his party would soon depart; and the thought of her consequent loneliness gave a melancholy tinge to every thing she looked upon. He, who had been so kind—who had told of things of whose existence she had never dreamed—who had been her companion in many a lonely ramble—whose presence had been like the dawn of a new life, was now about to leave her, and perhaps forever. It was like taking the light from her eyes; for every thing hitherto so joyous, seemed to be steeped in the shadows of a rayless night. From him she had learned so much; and now the voice that had opened her mind to such a joyous world was to be lost—to be heard no more. This was a sad, sad thought; and sometimes, when all around would be buried in sleep, her light form would be seen stealing through the meadow, and hurrying to the lone, sequestered fountain, and there, with nothing but the bright stars as watchers, mingle her tears with the diamond drops of the leaping water.

One night, when she thought every one at rest, stealing from her couch, she wended her way to the deep, dark dell of the bubbling spring, and seating herself in her accustomed place, beside the bubbling water, gave full vent to the sorrowful feelings within her. Long and bitterly did she weep; it was the first sorrow that had crossed the shelter of her love, and its gleam, in consequence, was the more intense. She was at last startled by a noise behind her; starting up in wild affright, she saw the form of a man near by; she would have fled, but then the low, soft voice of Norwood calling her name, reassured her.

"Rose, dear Rose, don't be alarmed," he continued, as he advanced toward where she stood on the margin of the spring; "I saw you leaving the hut, and imagining where you were going, I followed you; I would have spoken sooner, but I did not see you, and I was ascending the mountain."

At the sight of his well-known form, Rose sprung forward, and threw herself, weeping, into his arms.

"Why, Rose?" he exclaimed, "what is the matter with you?—why are you grieving so? Come, let us sit here, side by side, where we have sat so often, and tell me all your sorrow." "You have never yet encouraged any thing from me, and now, I know you will not refuse to share your griefs."

"Ah!" she began, with a fresh burst of tears, "you are going away—you are going to leave me. Though you did not tell me, I have long felt that you would go away,—and it will be so lonesome!"

"Rose, you need not grieve so much for my departure," replied Norwood, passing her throbbing hand to his breast. "Even if I do go away, I hope it will not be long till I return, and then I may have something good to tell; and you will have so many things to narrate to me—of your dreams, your thoughts; and then the many new and wonderful places that

would love and cherish her as she deserved. But this could not be as long as Sib was in existence; his was an older, dearer claim; and he felt convinced that if Rose had her free will, and every inclination held out, she would never desert him who had indeed been as a father, and whose whole life appeared to be entwined with that of his adopted child.

Norwood's musings, which were now becoming painful, were at length interrupted by Rose, whose whole manner now seemed changed from that of wild and passionate grief to one of quiet melancholy.

"Do you believe in dreams?" she asked, in her low, sweet voice, while her eyes, in the clear starlight, gazed anxiously in his.

"Not altogether," replied Norwood; "they are a kind of fars, that sometimes speak the truth. But why do you ask such a question?"

"Because," said Rose, "I have had such strange dreams; and they all seemed to leave such a sad weight upon my waking thoughts. For several nights, I have seen those dark, wild eyes that memory links with my earliest years, and which must be my mother's; and they seemed to smile so sadly on me, as if to say, yet to come, to come to me; and then, I have heard strange voices whispering to me—all in my dreams; I think some great change is about to happen me. To-night, as I passed the wild mountain gorge, I fancied the tall cedars in the rocks were like the persons whose voices I had heard in my dreams, and they seemed to beckon with their bare arms, as if they were waiting for me; and as I landed through that dark wood, the wind, whose voice I have of ages loved, seemed to whisper and the pine, as if waiting for some lost treasure; and to-night, this mountain seems hushed with a melancholy sound, as if the Wild Fawn were weeping for her long-imprisoned mate, and the water-falls are deep so black, nor are its drops so sparkling. Oh! there is a shadow upon every thing I see. Something is about to happen—and now, my mind seems struggling within me, as if it wanted to be free—to become a part of my mother's soul, that haunts me so at every step I take, and seems so familiar when I sleep."

"Rose, it is time for us to go," said Norwood, wishing to interrupt her melancholy thoughts, and change them to more lively ones. "I will go with you to the camp, but the wind is so cold, and you are so young; the night is cold, and as we return home, I will tell you of so many things I had intended to tell you before. But, good night, I will speak to you in a few days more, and then I will tell you, step by step, all the things that I have said to you, and I shall have more than I can tell you."

The next day, when the sun was shining brightly, Norwood and Rose left the house, going to the camp in the boat. There was no moon, but the stars twinkled brightly in the clear, cold

sky. A low breeze faintly moved the long branches of the tall dark pines, and seemed to fill the woods with mysterious whis- perings. Norwood's heart was heavy, yet he felt it his duty to speak words of comfort to his younger companion: and for this purpose, he spoke in a light, careless tone of her sad feel- ings, and pictured the joyous time they were to have, when spring, with all her beaming promises, would return, and also bring him back to live their pleasant days again. And then, to win her attention, and to kindle new thoughts, he pointed to the stars, and told her of their magnitude, and of the order and harmony of their movements; and then, he spoke of the Di- vine Power by whom all these were made—who had given laws to the Universe—whose all-seeing eye not only regulated the movements of so many whirling worlds, but also watched the actions of the tiniest insects—who lived in an eternity, and in whom every thing had life and being.

Rose was insensibly withdrawn from her own being in the contemplation of him whom Norwood so eloquently described. This was a theme that always awakened the deepest emotions of her soul; and never did her mind drink in his words with a greater relish. As he proceeded in his discourse, her whole be- ing seemed to change, and the thoughts and feelings that made her earthly seemed one by one to be severed, until the spiritual alone existed, and bore her toward the fruition of all her hopes—the development of all her whispering dreams.

They had now reached the edge of the meadow that lies a sleeping lake surrounded its little island of trees, where stood old Sib's mountain hut. Every thing was still and death-like. Norwood was still on his glorious theme, when, just as he was about stepping from the shadow of the woods, he saw the dark figure of a man crossing the meadow some little distance in ad- vance. He stopped instantly, and pointed out the object to Rose; but her mind had been so far away, so separated from all earthly things, that it was some time ere her thoughts could follow the direction of her eyes. The person whose appear- ance had so startled Norwood seemed, by his movements, to scan all things of observation; for he walked with his body bent forward, so as to appear but slightly above the tall grass with which the meadow was covered. Whenever it was, and apparently been looking about the hut; and whenever his eye- ball was now turning as if to get away as soon as possible. "How," the person was now crossing the path, suddenly turning aside off, that Norwood could not determine with certainty whether the person was an Indian or not.

"Hush!" said Rose, whose ear had been so much startled to have the turned, "I know him;" at the same time her voice sunk in the intense whisper: "It is John—John Cone; his appearance is the same of something better; for I never saw a good of his creeping over me. Let him pass," she continued, as she saw Nor-

wood preparing to dart forward to intercept him, "he might do some harm; and I would not like you to injure him; for he is the only son of him who has always been so kind to me. If any thing should happen Jake, the old man would grieve a good deal; for you know, however vicious, he is still his son; and a father's heart will always speak, no matter how depraved the child!"

The person whom Rose had thus easily distinguished in the crowd, had now approached the woods, but at the distance of twenty yards or more to the left of where Norwood was standing. Having himself erect, he paused a moment as if listening; appearing satisfied, he gave a low, peculiar whistle, which was immediately answered from the woods near by; the figures of four or five others were seen emerging from the shadow and joining him. The whole party then withdrew to the dark line of woods, where their forms could just be distinguished, crowding together as if in some earnest consultation. In a short time they again appeared in full view, when they divided—two of them, cutting across the meadow in the direction of the hut, and the other two, keeping along the woods, passed within four or five yards of the place where Norwood and Rose were concealed; and crossing the narrow stream that was near by, kept on, still directing their steps toward the cavities which was kept in a little meadow about half a mile distant.

Rose seemed in a moment to comprehend their intentions. The first party was to create a commotion among the horses and hounds; and while she and the rest would have left the cabin and run to protect the frightened animals, the other party would have rushed upon the trapper and his son, and succeeded in their intentions—and what then would have been the result? Jake had expressed himself too often—and now there seemed to be no escape if she should be discovered; and then she thought if they did not find her, their rage would prompt them to commit some terrible act upon her friends. For a while she knew not what to do; at one moment resolving to rush forward and encounter herself, and at another, striving as if to hide herself among the many recesses of the mountains. Norwood saw her agitation, and readily divined its cause; but while he sought her with impetuous words, he himself was at a loss what to do—whether to attempt to storm his companions in the hut, or follow in the wake of the two who had passed him and frustrate their intention toward the animals; but at all hazards, he was resolved that Rose should not leave his side—not even for a moment.

CHAPTER X.

THE FINAL TRAGEDY.

WHILE Norwood was endeavoring to think in what manner it would be best for him to act, he was somewhat startled to see another figure start up from the bank of the stream on his right, and hurry along, as if watching the party who were now some distance on their way toward the hut. Rose started forward, and before Norwood well knew that she had lost her way, and the stranger converse a few moments, then darting back, she was at his side again in an instant; and whispering, "Fritz," took his hand and led him forward to where Fritz was standing.

"I'm glad to see you," said Fritz, when Norwood had joined him; "I knew you were somewhere in the woods, for I saw you leave the hut. I was on watch all night—I saw tracks in the mountains yesterday, and I fear John would be about after this kick. I watched him all the time he was prowling about the cabin, and followed him till he joined his other companions. We must manage to alarm our friends—I'm sorry you haven't your rifle; do you crawl along down the creek—the bank will hide your person—and when you get opposite the place where the cabin is, crawl on your hands and knees through the grass—wake up Sam and the rest. I'll go after some paper darts; they mustn't be permitted to take our animals. Be quick!—these devils will take hear if they get a chance! Take Rose with you—be off, and I don't lose a moment!"

When Fritz had said this, he leaped the stream and disappeared in the woods.

Norwood did not lose an instant. Rose was even quicker than he, for she kept ahead, and no closely guided her way along the windings of the stream, whose bank, when a rocky one, would hide them effectually from all observation. In due season they had arrived at the little path that led from the stream to the hut. Looking cautiously over the bank, Norwood saw no mark of man or beast through the morning. The stream, however, still fairly fairly, and he saw a little distance down the stream, but the intervening space was so thickly covered with stones and grass that it was not likely to be discovered by any one who was not looking out. Rose did not delay a moment, she slipped herself flat upon the ground, and crawled some fifty yards toward the hut. Norwood followed her; he was assured that by this time the desperadoes had left the place, and that they would not return until some time in the afternoon. By eyes like his, any object, however small, would be easily

He wished; and then, the first notice he received would be a loud yell from their morning rides. This thought gave a faint smile to his face; but at the same time every man in the party felt a vast responsibility to his friends, who seemed to be in some measure of danger.

They had now arrived within a little distance of the house; every thing was yet quiet. Rose paused, and whispered to Norwood; at the same time pointing to the shadow of the rock on the left. Her quick eye had detected the appearance of a new horse in the trunk. The tree stood five or six yards from the house, a little to one side; and Norwood saw it would be impossible to proceed much farther without being discovered. He was at a loss what to do; but Rose whispered to him to remain quiet—he would find means of apprising Sib of danger. But scarcely had she spoken, when a solitary shot rang loud and sharp upon the still air in the direction of their retreat. Its echoes were yet sounding among the mountains, when the shadow that marked the door of the cabin were raised, and some one appeared as if to step into the open air; at the same moment a low, quick, chirping sound from Rose made him stop most hastily: it was Sib, who, upon hearing the shot, was alarmed, and was about going forth, when the well-known voice from Rose made him pause. The warning was also heard by more than Sib; for the person whom Rose had discovered in the shadow of the tree now came forward as if to see whether the sound proceeded. Rose knew they were discovered; telling Norwood to follow, she rose to her feet and hurried forward toward the door of the house. But the unknown was too quick; anticipating her intention he had darted before her and the place of refuge, and Rose found herself rapidly clasped in the arms of Jack Crow. Giving a scream, she attempted to break away, but she was held tightly.

Norwood now dashed forward and caught the villain by the wrist. At the same time, turning him backward to the earth, he managed to free Rose from his grasp; but he held her very tightly. Norwood was now seized in turn by another person, and forced to let go his hold. His assailant was a powerful fellow, and having the advantage, held him to the earth, while, passing him with one hand, he endeavored to draw his knife with the other. But his adversary was of a different opinion. A knife was thrust from the chest of the last, only a few inches away, and Norwood fell his enemy deep heavily upon his breast; he was dead. The other, the unknown, having released him, sprang to his feet, and saw the other about running off with Rose in his arms. Springing forward to free Rose, he was about to dash at him, but he was stopped by a voice which called him back. He turned, and saw the other, and the same time he heard

the well-known voice of 'Ziah immediately behind him, shouting:

"Give it to them! give the Injuns no quarter!—lynch 'em at them!"

Norwood was now in the utmost danger, for his opponent was striking at him with his knife, though still held on to Rose, who appeared to be but a slight thing within his grasp.

"What is he?" shouted 'Ziah, as he appeared suddenly at his side; but scarcely had he the words uttered, when a volley of fire was discharged from the clump of trees, followed by a quick start from 'Ziah, and a sudden exclamation, something like "Jerusalem!" through his clenched teeth. Norwood had at last succeeded in tearing Rose from the grasp of his opponent, who, now seeing Sib and the others rushing from the hut, sprang upon Norwood with a yell of rage, and plunged his long knife into Rose's breast, who had sprung forward and received the blow intended for another. Jake for a moment appeared paralyzed with what he had done, and before he had recovered sufficient presence of mind to escape, he was felled to the ground by a blow from the butt of old Sib's rifle. All this had happened within a minute's time—it had scarcely commenced till it was over.

Norwood caught Rose in his arms, and pressing her to his bosom, as if by that means he would stop the gushing blood, rushed with her into the hut, calling wildly upon the Doctor to come quickly to his assistance. He bore her to her own little couch, and laying her gently down, supported her drooping head upon his breast. The Captain had succeeded in striking a light, and lighting a large pine-knot, ushered in the Doctor, who, upon Norwood's call, had hastened for his instrument, knowing that his professional assistance would be required; and he now approached with hasty steps, not knowing but that it was Norwood who had been wounded.

Rose lay still and quiet upon that fond resting-place, her large, soft eyes gazing upward into Norwood's, who, looking down, looked with an agonizing expression upon every line and shade of hers. The red blood was oozing steadily from the deep wound in her breast, and dropping in heavy drops from her body upon the matting on the floor. The Doctor bent down for a few moments, carefully probing the wound. Norwood's whole soul was in his glance, which now watched every movement of the Doctor; and when the latter raised himself, he saw in an instant that there was no hope for the girl who had so nobly shielded his own. The bitter tears forced themselves from his eyes. Rose felt them dropping upon her face, and then she gave such a look, so full of unfeigned affection—unfeigned affection—that he bent himself down upon her head and wept, in the very agonizing moment of surgery. The Doctor was now carefully and tenderly attending on her; but

and as he wrapped the bandage around her youthful breast, even the fountain of his feelings was touched, and a tear or two dropped upon his hands, as they moved intent upon their sad occupation.

The voice of old Sib was now distinguished in the outer apartment. He had as yet not heard of the sad event to his "Mountain Rose," as he often affectionately called her. The Captain, giving the torch into the Doctor's hand, slipped silently out, to break the heavy news as lightly as possible. In a few moments Sib was heard exclaiming:

"Where is she?—where is my child? I don't believe it! Let me go!" he continued, as if struggling to free himself from the Captain's detaining hand. "I will see her! Rose, Rose!" he called, as he appeared at the entrance to her little apartment. But here his eyes drank in the whole scene at a glance. He stopped, then advanced, and stopped again; while his eyes wandered wildly from Rose to Norwood, and from these to the face of the Doctor.

"Father!" said Rose, stretching her arms toward the bewildered old man.

That voice, and that mute action, still more expressive, recalled his bewildered mind.

"Rose!" he wildly exclaimed, darting forward and catching her in his arms—"what's the matter?" Then his eyes rested upon the white bandages on her breast, which were stained with the still bleeding wound. "Who's done this?" he continued, looking frantically from one to the other. "Who's killed my child? Tell me! Rose, Rose!—won't you speak to me? Are you hurt? Don't you know me—your poor old Sib?"

"Come!" said the Doctor, now interposing, "your child is badly, dangerously wounded, and any excitement might kill her. You know me," he continued, as Sib gazed into his face, as if unconscious of his words and person; "I am now the surgeon of your Rose; and I say, if you are not quiet she will die!"

"Oh, I'll do any thing," said the old man, in a subdued and frightened voice, "if you'll only save my child! But I can't believe she's so badly hurt. She wouldn't leave me!—would you, Rose?" he continued, in a plaintive voice, bending his rough face to hers.

"Come, Sib, this won't do," said the Doctor, taking his hand. "You know she is badly wounded, and the least excitement might kill her. You must come with me. Quiet is every thing to her."

"I'll be quiet, Doctor—indeed I will!" pleaded old Sib, letting her lay back again on Norwood's breast. "Only let me stay here near my child. Don't take me away. I'll sit here in the corner, where I can see and be near her, and I won't say a word!"

The old man was completely overcome. His voice, so strong and ringing, was now as plaintive as a child's. With a trembling heart he crouched himself in the corner, at the foot of Rose's couch, and there sat like a frozen sorrow, watching every movement of the Doctor, whom he supposed to have the life of Rose in his hands.

Rose had spoken but once, and that was when old Sib had first appeared. She lay so still, and her breathing was so low, that Norwood looked down several times, as if fearing that she was dead. The only thing that appeared to live were her eyes, and they ever wandered from Norwood to her "father"—the only beings upon the broad earth that had ever seemed to love her, and the only ones that she did ever love.

The Captain now appeared at the entrance, and he knelt to the Doctor. Ziah had been wounded in the shoulder by a rifle-ball, and now needed his assistance. Giving a few directions to Norwood, he silently departed, and found Ziah badly, but not dangerously wounded. Fritz was there also. His cheek was pale, and his eyes, which continually looked toward one corner of the hut, had an almost ferocious expression. The object which he regarded with so much animosity was the prisoner of Jake Cone, now lying bound hand and foot—the author of all this sad change upon his father's home.

The Doctor was apparently the only collected person among them. He kept moving silently and continually from one apartment to the other—now easing the position of Ziah, and then applying a sedative to the lips of Rose. All seemed to look upon him as the person in whose hands was the power of life and death.

The night dragged heavily onward. Rose had sunk into an uneasy slumber. Norwood now sat by her bedside, watching every breath she drew. It would be useless to describe his sufferings—they were such as would leave their impress upon his young spirit during the many years of his after life. Now sat crouching in his old posture, gazing wearily upon his couch. Every one was still and quiet. A shadow had settled upon their household—a deep, dark shadow. The midnight hour is a gloom's might come again to some, but could it shadow the life? Sorrow and sorrow, how quickly ye follow in the wake of joy! Where the sun gleams brightest, there is the greatest shadow. Light and darkness, joy and sorrow, ye are ever inseparable!

The long looked-for day at last dawned. All had turned to it as the harbinger of good, yet why they knew not. Rose could scarcely get on, but her father was busy, and he thought that some comfort sometimes from her parted lips, and at times from Norwood heard his own name often.

When day had fully opened, no more saw ye, and as if bowed by a heavy weight, moved slowly out. Jake said that

the corner of the cabin, and Fritz still sat and watched, as if his eyes would burst him. Sib spoke not, but passing out of the hall, returned in a few moments with his rifle, which had been brought straight in the last night's way. With a piece of buckskin he covered the muzzle of the loaded breach. Then, taking his powder-horn and bullet-pouch, he calmly and carefully proceeded to pour out the charge, and emptying it into the bore of his piece, placed a thin doe-skin patch over the muzzle, and over it was laid the ounce ball of lead; then, with his long wing-stick he rammed it home. Jake eyed his every movement. His blanched cheek and quivering lip betrayed his fears.

Having finished loading his rifle, Sib went up to Jake, and stooping down, loosened the thongs that confined his feet. He gave a look toward Fritz which was perfectly understood. Rising, the man almost stepped full body of Jake between them, they passed themselves over on each side, and thus supported, led him out of the hall. Without a word spoken, the two brought him to a large pine that stood the furthest of the clump of trees, and with a compass which Fritz had with him, bound the trembling body of Jake to the massive trunk. Jake was fully conscious of their intentions. Giving a long, loud yell of despair, he begged and prayed most piteously for his life, calling upon his father with the most endearing terms; then, seeing no hope in his first entreaties, turning to Fritz, and crav'ng his assistance with the most abject language. Not a word did Sib utter. His eye was fixed and almost rayless, without a single spark of life or feeling, and his face cold and deeply-stamped with the marks of sorrow and cold and bloodless as a face of stone.

These objects being accomplished, the two turned their backs on the victim, whose cries were loud and heart-rending, and walked slowly back toward the hall as if musing their steps. Arrived almost at the door of the cabin, Sib stopped, turned, and glancing once back toward his brother, raised his rifle—aimed it, and pointed it at the heart of that living target. His finger pressed the trigger—another instant, and life would have been no more joys or sorrows for Jake Cone; but the rifle is suddenly thrust from his deadly aim, and Sib made haste to retreat toward the house by Ross!—Ross, who had rushed forth at the first sound of Jake's cries, but now, and with the energy of a strong heart, had come in time to save him!

"Father," she cried, "you must not do it! He is your son—your only son! He can do no harm! I know you will forgive him for this crime—you can! Ross says so! I am dying, father, but I have never yet in my life been so happy as now. You have never yet forgiven me any thing, you dear old man; and this is my last request!"

Sib was powerfully affected during this time. His heart was torn—the rock was stricken—and the tears gushed freely

from his eyes. When Rose had done speaking, he caught her in his arms, and cried:

"You've saved him, Rose—no other living being could have saved him!" Then turning to Fritz, whose sunburnt cheeks were moistened with tears, he said: "Fritz, go and loose him. An angel has interceded for him. Let him go when he likes!"

As soon as Rose perceived the success of her prayers, the strength that had hitherto upborne her suddenly forsook her, and she sunk helpless upon the old man's breast. Norwood and the Doctor, from whom Rose had forcibly escaped, now urged Sib to hasten with her into the hut, which he did; and placing her gently upon her little bed, crouched back into his former place, and continued looking with an almost idiot stare upon the Doctor, who was busily engaged in endeavoring to recover her from her deathlike stupor. Norwood knew it would soon be over. Kneeling down, he buried his face in his hands, and gave full vent to his crushed feelings. The whole household had now gathered in, and stood silent and sad, gazing upon their dying favorite. Ziah was there also, his long and solemn countenance, pale with the effects of his own wound, moistened by his bitter tears. All were weeping but Sib. His heart was now a dead—a pulseless void. His feelings were all frozen by the intenseness of his woe; and he looked upon the sad faces of those around him, and wondered what made *them* weep.

Rose was waking from her deathlike trance. Slowly, consciousness returned. Her eyes wandered inquiringly from face to face, until they settled upon Norwood. A sad, sweet smile played across her countenance as she saw his tearful eyes placed close to hers. Her lips moved, and her voice, still sweet though sinking to the lowest whisper, was heard by Norwood, saying:

"You won't leave me—will you?"

"Never!" exclaimed Norwood, clasping her to his heart.

She gave him one happy, grateful look, and his lips received the last breath of her who was too pure to live, and yet too young to die.

THE END.

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 and 100 lbs. 2 males, 1 female, 4 males,
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